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## THE TRAINING OF THE TWIG

WORKS BY THE  
REV. C. L. DRAWBRIDGE

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THE TRAINING OF THE TWIG  
(RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OF CHILDREN)

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# THE TRAINING OF THE TWIG

(RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OF CHILDREN)

BY THE REV.

C. L. DRAWBRIDGE, M.A.

*NEW IMPRESSION*

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.

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1906

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“Neglect of the art of education simply means that the teacher must, at best, blunder his way to success, laboriously correct his errors by the failure or mischief produced, and slowly discover things for himself which others have discovered before him. Why should we tread the thorny path of error, or traverse the dreary swamps of failure, when a safer, pleasanter, and shorter path has been pointed out to us by those who have travelled the road before us?”

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## PREFACE

THE object of this book is to deal popularly, and simply, with the rudiments of the science and art of religious education of children. It is intended for the use of **parents** and **teachers**—of parents because they are responsible for the souls of the children they have called into being—of teachers because having undertaken a part of the parents' responsibility, they naturally desire to **know how** to fulfil the duties of the position they have assumed.

I am indebted to Landon, Trumbull, and others who have written very ably upon the subject of education.

HAMPSTEAD, N.W.

*January, 1905*



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# THE TRAINING OF THE TWIG

## I

### CHILDHOOD IS THE SEED-TIME

IN his letter to the Galatians, S. Paul insists that the harvest is the result of sowing, and he implies that men try to deceive themselves, and God, with regard to this fact. He says "Be not deceived, God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap" (Gal. vi. 7). Be the nature of the soil what it may, there will be no harvest if there has been no sowing. And whatever the climate, **only that kind of seed will grow up of which the seeds have been planted.** There is also another very obvious and important consideration, namely that **there is a seed-time.** To neglect to sow during the correct season, and then to begin to plant when it is time to reap, is to waste time and energy.

Jesus Christ would have us see the analogy between sowing and teaching (S. Luke viii. 11). To teach is to take one germinal thought at a time from one's own soul, and plant it **so that it will grow** in the soul of another. Our Lord impresses upon us the fact that **THE** seed, the all important seed, is the Word of God, and we all of us realise that **childhood is the seed-time**, and that **the soul of the child is virgin soil**.

“We sow a thought and reap an act,  
We sow an act and reap a habit,  
We sow a habit and reap a character,  
We sow a character and reap a judgment.”

Something more than teaching is necessary however, just as the art of husbandry includes more than the process of sowing.

## II

### “THE CHILD IS FATHER OF THE MAN”

WHAT Wordsworth meant by the above statement was, of course, that the life of the child determines the character of the adult. Each of us is to-day, what our past has made us, and the most important part of that past was the period during which our character was “wax to receive and marble to retain.” **Character is the sum total of past impressions, and childhood is the impressionable age.** It is of paramount importance to make the most of our opportunities, before character becomes fixed and rigid. Carlyle has said: “I acknowledge the all-but omnipotence of early culture and nurture”, and Pope has thus expressed the reason why early culture is ‘all-but omnipotent’—“Just as the twig is bent the tree’s inclined.” The time will come when it may be impossible to bend the full-grown tree, but it is comparatively very easy to bend and train the tender sapling.

Bishop Dupanloup has well said that "**The world would be saved if we devoted ourselves to the children.**" They will not always be children, we are dealing with the parents and leaders of to-morrow. They will carry on the work where we shall leave it. If it is true that "She who rocks the cradle rules the world," it is no less true that the teacher is sowing seeds which will replant themselves generation after generation. A man planted an acorn in a waste patch of ground, and left it. Long after that man's tombstone had crumbled away to dust, the single acorn had become an ever-extending oak forest.

### III

## THE FORMATION OF CHARACTER

THE one thing which man carries away with him when he dies is his character. All else that he may have gained he is forced to leave behind him. His eternal destiny will depend upon the nature of his character.

And throughout his life on earth, this sum total of his past is the most potent factor of life. Success or failure, happiness or misery, honour or dishonour, everything in fact, is more the result of character than of brains, position, knowledge, or industry.

**During childhood character is forming.** An eternal destiny is in the making. Good and bad tendencies are struggling for the mastery. The soul is in a state of flux.

Parents and teachers have in their hands the most delicate, the most susceptible, the most precious, and important, of all raw materials, the soul of a trustful little child. If they do not mould it, the World, the Flesh, and the Devil will.

The wisest of men has said: "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it" (Prov. xxii. 6).

## IV

### JESUS CHRIST AND CHILDREN

It was Jesus Christ who discovered children. Until He came, mankind had not the grace of seeing the graces of childhood. The Son of God, who chose to come into the world by way of the cradle and the home, taught man to reverence the little ones. Before the Christian era, the world had no respect for innocence, no admiration for humility, but rather an intense contempt. Men had no appreciation for simplicity and trustfulness. All the chief qualities of childhood were despised; and boys and girls were only appreciated in so far as they might become useful to the State, in after years. Consequently when the little ones crowded clingingly around our Lord, the disciples instinctively and promptly interfered. They regarded the presence of children not only as useless and inconvenient, but also as a dishonour to their Master. They considered that these affectionate and demonstrative little ones were unnecessarily and seriously interrupting an important mission. Consequently they "rebuked those that brought them" (S. Mark x. 13). "But

when Jesus saw it"—so far from appreciating their action—"He was much displeased, and said unto them **Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of God**" (S. Mark x. 14). Do not drive away from the Teacher the most promising of all His pupils. It is children and the child-like of whom the Kingdom of Heaven is made up. That Spiritual Kingdom belongs to the simple-minded, the trustful, those who easily believe, those who live in an atmosphere of cheerful dependence, those who are ever anxious to learn, or who, at least, are always conscious of their ignorance. Of such is the Kingdom, of which the meek and lowly Saviour is King. It needed more than one such lesson to teach the disciples how to appreciate the qualities of children.

After the Twelve had received much additional instruction, and had enjoyed the inestimable advantage of intimate daily association with the Master, He found it necessary to give them another lesson on the same subject—the heavenliness of children. As they walked along, the Apostles had been secretly wrangling about seniority, and their relative positions in the Kingdom which Christ was to set up. They had been carrying on a fierce and bitter discussion as to which of them should be the greatest. Jesus

Christ therefore took a little child into His arms, and holding it up as an object-lesson in the midst of His disciples, taught them a lesson on **humility**, using the child as an illustration of what he meant. Preaching from this text, He said: "Except ye be converted (changed) and become like this little child, not one of you shall be the greatest, or even the least in the Kingdom of Heaven—ye shall never enter it." (S. Matt. xviii. 3) "**Whosoever shall humble himself as this little child the same shall be greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven.**"

But several lessons were needed by the 'Twelve, before they could appreciate the dignity of childhood, and the reverence due to it. "**Take heed**" said Christ, "that ye despise not one of these little ones, for I say unto you, that in Heaven, their angels do always behold the face of My Father" (S. Matt. xviii. 10) and

"**Whosoever shall offend (scandalise) one of these little ones which believe in Me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea**" (S. Matt. xviii. 6).

"**Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you he shall in no wise lose his reward**" (S. Matt. x. 42).



**“Whoso shall receive this little child in My name receiveth Me, and whosoever receiveth Me receiveth Him that sent Me”** (S. Luke ix. 48).

We can imagine the tender Saviour watching the children at their games in the market place at Jerusalem. He took an interest in the antics of these little mimics as they played at weddings and funerals (S. Matt. xi. 17 and S. Luke vii. 32). No wonder that they loved and followed One who could sympathise with them even in their play. Consequently we find that when the 5,000 men followed Jesus Christ round to the other side of the Lake of Galilee, and remained with Him for three days, there were little children there too. The evangelist did not trouble to count them, because he regarded them as of little importance, but he mentions their presence. “There were 5,000 men,” he says, **“besides the children”** (S. Matt. xiv. 21). Children counted in the estimate of the Saviour however—**“It is not the will of your Father which is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish”** (S. Matt. xviii. 14).

**“Whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God as a little child he shall not enter therein”** (S. Mark x. 15).

Yes, children were His most promising pupils. After lamenting over the unbelief of Corazin

and Bethsaida, where most of His mighty works had been done, He lifted up His face to Heaven and cried: "**I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes, even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Thy sight**" (S. Matt. xi. 25).

And so to the very end of His ministry it was the children who responded to His teaching. On Palm Sunday, when the grey-bearded theologians, from the Sacred City, came up with shocked and annoyed faces, and drew His attention to the fact that the children were crying out before Him "**Hosanna to the Son of David,**" He replied: "**Have ye never read this Scripture Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast Thou perfected praise**" (S. Matt. xxi. 16).

The lesson, which Jesus Christ taught the disciples of old, is one of the first that teachers should learn, if they would obey the Master's command—"Suffer the little children to come unto Me." **We must believe in these little ones**, who impose such confidence in us, their instructors. It is only when we realise what wonders can be wrought with this most promising of materials (the soul of a child) that we are able to achieve marvels.

## V

### EDUCATION AS A MEANS TO AN END

BEFORE commencing any kind of work it is necessary to form a clear, definite, and adequate conception of the end which has to be achieved. In order to rightly adjust means to ends, we must know what those ends are. This seems to be a very obvious truism, but it is one which is oftener than not forgotten by Sunday School teachers. These same teachers would never think of beginning to cut up a piece of material, without having first formed a very definite idea of what they intend to make with it, and yet they set to work to mould the plastic souls of children without any very definite plan to work to. They seem to imagine that the Master, for whom they work, is glad enough to find any kind of labourers for His vineyard of Souls. At any rate, in no other field of usefulness is less system and method observable, than in that of religious teaching. Would that in dealing with souls, teachers would first pause to decide what they intend to achieve.

The reader is, perhaps, already engaged upon this most important and difficult work of Religious Education. May I venture to ask if you have a plan, and if so, is it a **definite** one? What exactly is it that you have set out to accomplish? Is it to inform the **mind** of the child? That is no doubt a **part** of the work. One must tell the child about God, impart useful information with regard to the soul, give instruction as to the relations between God and man, and sketch out the Scheme of Salvation. But have you any definite plan in your mind? Do you yourself know that which you would teach? If so we may pass on to the next point.

We have something more to do than tell the child certain facts. We have not merely to tell, **we must teach**. In other words, our business is to cause him to know. If at the end of our harangue he has learned nothing, it is obvious that we have failed to teach anything.

Nor does our duty end when we have taught the things which belong unto their peace, **we must clinch the lesson**, in such a way that the children remember what they have been taught.

Then again to cause them to know what the truth is, and also to remember it, is worse than useless, unless we **induce them to put into practice** what they know. "To him that knoweth to do

good and doeth it not, to him it is sin," (S. James iii. 17). Consequently "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them" (S. John xiii. 17).

But to confine our attention for the moment to our aim in so far as it consists in instructing the minds of the children. We have to cause them to learn certain facts. We shall only have time to teach a very limited number of these. Let us then select those that are most important. What is your idea of **the most important truths of revelation**? Does your list include the number of Solomon's wives, the exact age of Methuselah, the precise location of certain villages in Palestine? Will a knowledge of these facts enable the children, who learn them, to face successfully the dangers and temptations of life? Is the end and aim of religious education to teach Jewish History, ancient Geography, or the latest thing that has been said about the authorship of the Pentateuch? Is it such things as these that will bring a man peace at the last? The soul of the modern Christian can be saved without learning by heart the names of the ancient Kings of Israel and Judah. Obviously, information of the kind we have indicated, is less important than a knowledge of the **spiritual, and moral truths**, which it was the object of the inspired History and Biography to teach and to illustrate. "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for

our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope" (Rom. xv. 4). Patience, Comfort, Hope, constitute the kernel. Names and dates are merely the husk and shell. "The letter killeth but the Spirit giveth life" (2 Cor. iii. 6).

## VI

### EDUCATING THE CONSCIENCE, WILL AND AFFECTIONS

THE teacher, having formed a definite and clear conception of what kind of information to implant in the mind of the pupil, next proceeds to consider other phases of his divine work. He has to deal with the whole child, and not only with its intellectual faculties. For instance, the pupil's **conscience** has to be educated. This faculty of judging between right and wrong obviously needs instructing, and not only instructing but awakening. It is his unenlightened conscience which makes the Thug of India regard murder as a virtue. Many of the greatest crimes of history have been committed in obedience to the dictates of an unenlightened conscience. And not only does man's inward monitor need to be enlightened, it must also be awakened and set in motion. The mere fact of knowing what he ought to do, and what he ought to avoid, is of no use to the pupil, except as a necessary preliminary to righteous action on his part.

Thus we realise that the child's **will** has to be trained. It must be awakened, set in motion, strengthened and stimulated, in order that it may enable him to translate vague desires into persistent efforts. In short we have to **influence conduct**. We must train their dispositions while these are in process of formation. We must seize the opportunity, while the children are at a susceptible age, to assist them to form good habits and combat incipient evil ones. Nor is this the extent of our work.

In addition to educating and training the mind and conscience and will, it is our duty and privilege to **touch the heart**, and appeal to the feelings, in such a way as to win their love for Christ. Christianity consists in something more than adopting a certain high code of morals, it includes personal devotion to an Individual, Jesus Christ. Thus the final aim of all Christian teachers should be to woo the child over to the side of the Saviour.

To sum up what has been said, and to express it in one sentence—**The whole being of the teacher must come into intimate contact with the whole being of the child**, in such a way as to educate and train every faculty. In this way alone can we hope to build them up in saintliness.



## VII

### “WHO IS SUFFICIENT FOR THESE THINGS?”

THE reader may well ask, “Who but a saint can educate another in saintliness?” “Who is good enough?” It is natural to feel considerable diffidence in undertaking to mould such delicate and precious material as the innocent and trustful soul of a child. It is not a work to be undertaken lightly and carelessly. S. Paul said that he “Agonised in birth-pangs until Christ was formed” in his pupils (Gal. iv. 19).

On the other hand, however, one bears in mind that if we do not undertake the work it will probably be left undone, and we may safely assume that having called us to the task, God will help us to do our part, and will Himself perform His own share. We are apt to fear that the hungry souls of the children will look up to us for spiritual food, and in a measure at least, go empty away. We feel like the disciples of old, when Christ said “Give ye them to eat.”

Like them we are inclined to cry out "How can we satisfy so great a need as theirs?" But our answer is contained in Christ's counter question: "How many loaves have ye?" It is not a question of what we have not, but of what we have. However little we may have to give, that little is sufficient for the moment, and in the process of giving it increases in our hands, as did the barley loaves of old. It is a mock humility, and a want of trust in God, which makes men bury their one talent, instead of using it. If it is only one, yet if it is all we have to give, our Father will graciously accept and use it. Do not we, who are parents, accept the little presents given us by our children, even when their gifts have no intrinsic value, and are of no apparent use? He who died to save the world, and who has said "It is not the will of your Father in Heaven that one of these little ones should perish" will not refuse to accept the offer of a heart and life to be devoted to the service of His little ones. The question then is not "How can we satisfy these children with the bread of life?" but rather "How many loaves have we?"

Let us not, however, offer to God that which costs us nothing (2 Sam. xxiv. 24). In this kind of work, that which costs the teacher nothing is worth just as much as it costs and no more. Let us at least give the very best we have. We

ought to be able to say to our pupils, as S. Paul said to his, "I will very gladly spend and be spent for you." Results are in God's hands, and we may safely, hopefully, and trustfully, leave Him to do His part, but only so long as we do ours. Let us work hopefully and cheerfully

Though failure oft-repeated, dim the light  
Of high resolve, wherewith thy youth was bright,  
If each fresh morn thou gird thee to the fight,  
IT IS ENOUGH.

Though hopes which made the world seem half divine  
 Fade in thy clasp and suffer slow decline,  
 If thou for others' hopes exchangest thine,  
IT IS ENOUGH.

*Dorothea Hollins*

## VIII

### THE TEACHER AS A MEDIUM

JESUS CHRIST has said "**without Me ye can do nothing,**" (S. John xv. 5). A better rendering of the Greek would be "**Apart from Me ye can accomplish nothing.**" **It is a question of contact.** Whatever the teacher passes on to the pupil must come first from God. To lose contact with Jesus Christ is to be severed from the vine. Only those branches which are attached to the stem can bear fruit, and thus supply food for the hungry. This is not merely a pretty metaphor, it teaches a scientific fact. It is as impossible to pass on to another any truly **spiritual** message, without this spiritual contact with Christ, as it is impossible for the severed telephone wire to carry messages. Connection is as necessary in the one case as in the other.

We may here quote a prayer by Bishop Walsham How:—

O Good Shepherd who camest to seek and to save that which was lost, be with me in this my

work. Strengthen me in my weakness. Give me greater zeal for Thy glory; greater love for the souls Thou diedst to save. Let not my sins or infirmities hinder Thy grace. Grant me faithfulness with tenderness, and boldness with meekness. Teach me that I may teach. Comfort me that I may comfort. Bless that which I shall speak in Thy Name. And have mercy upon the Pastor and the flock; for Thine own merits' sake.

The teacher must be a man of prayer, he must pray over his lesson preparation, pray for the child, and teach in a prayerful spirit. His soul will thus be in tune with God, in telepathy with Jesus, and it shall be given him what to speak, and how to speak. **Thought transference can only take place between two minds which are in true sympathy** (just as the Marconigram is only read by the receiver which is in tune with the transmitter.)

The teacher must also be in true contact with the soul of the child, in order to deliver God's message. Some teachers lose contact with God and are out of sympathy with the divine. They lack inspiration, and have no message. Others fail on the manward side. They have no soul-contact with the pupil. A lack of sympathy with the child prevents them from passing on their message.

## IX

### TRUTH THROUGH PERSONALITY

THE man in the street who does not study the Bible, does study the Bible student. And he estimates the former by its influence upon the latter. He may not be acting wisely in so doing, but that is not the point, the point is that he does **judge religion by its professors**—he estimates the tree by its fruits. In doing so he often fails to make allowances for the fact that we indulge in religious exercises, not because we are sinless, but because we want to become so. The average man, however, does not realise that it is because we are far from perfect that we go to God in prayer, and also study His Book.

This practical, but somewhat mistaken method adopted by the world, of judging religion by its apparently inadequate effects upon its professors, is adopted by all children. The pupil studies the teacher much more closely than he does the lesson, and he estimates the latter by the former. Consequently the child learns far more from example than by precept.

S. Paul said to the teachers whom he had prepared "Ye are our epistle, written in our hearts, known and read of all men" (2 Cor. iii. 2). What S. Paul **wrote** few would study, but everyone read S. Paul's disciples.

Obviously God's method of teaching the human race is a very **personal** one, and truth is nearly always conveyed **through personality**. In the Bible, and in the world, instead of abstract truth, we have as a rule, concrete examples of it, in the form of human lives, which, by the power of God, have become superhuman and divine. It may be said that the sacred page is the very Word of God. But what is the Bible, and in what way does it teach divine truth?—Nearly always by example rather than by precept, by means of history rather than by lists of rules and regulations, biography predominates over sermons, illustrations are more numerous than formulæ.

When Jesus Christ came He did not go into seclusion and write a book. He lived an instructive life and set a living example.

Christianity is a very personal religion, and consists chiefly of personal devotion to an Individual, Jesus Christ. S. Paul summed up his own Christianity in one sentence, "For me to live is Christ" (Phil. i. 21), and our Lord said "I am the Truth" (S. John xiv. 6).

The Saviour's method of converting the world

was to train twelve men, who should, by their behaviour, exemplify "How great things God had done for them." They were Christ's epistles, known and read of all men. And when people observed that "they were unlearned and ignorant men they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus" (Acts iv. 13). Their lives shone with a reflected light.

S. Paul was acting under divine inspiration when he wrote his instructions to Timothy, his fellow-teacher, and said "Take heed to **thyself** and to the doctrine" (1 Tim. iv. 16). **Thyself** first. The doctrine afterwards. Example must always carry more weight than precept. Religious teaching is the transfer of divine truth from one living agent to another. It consists in **taking a living, pulsating thought from one's own mind, and planting it so that it will grow in the living mind of another.** Thus teaching does not consist in repeating second-hand thoughts, learned up out of a lesson-book. It is rather the presentation of truth which was first a part of the teacher's own life and experience. Teaching necessitates fruit-bearing. The teacher feeds another with the **outgrowth of his own life.** If the lesson is not an outgrowth of the teacher's own life and experience, it will not become a part of the pupil's life.

Thus there are two indispensable elements in



teaching, and both of them are essential—truth and personality.

S. Paul places the latter first in order of importance, because it is what the teacher **is**, rather than what he **says**, that is the most important factor. The lesson must have passed through the teacher's soul, and have been a part of his life. It is insufficient to merely cram it up, and then let it leak out at his lips before he has had time to forget it. I once heard a clergyman preach one of the best sermons that has ever been written, and yet not one of his hearers appreciated it. He had copied it out of a book, consequently the personal element was lacking.

## X

### INFLUENCE

THE most important factor in religious education is influence. This subtle and potent agency is of two kinds, conscious and unconscious, voluntary and involuntary.

Trumbull illustrates the difference between voluntary and involuntary influence by means of the following story:—A man who was starting a Sunday School in the Wild West, set to work to hunt up pupils. Having found a small boy in a clearing, he sat down beside him, and invited him to join. “We are going to have a nice School,” he said, “and we want all the boys to be in it. You’ll come and join us to-night, won’t you?” “No!” was the emphatic and abrupt reply. The missionary was not a man to be easily discouraged; so he took out a picture-paper from his pocket, and, putting his arm tenderly around the little fellow, he showed the paper, and explained its pictures, adding, that papers like that would be given to the scholars of the new Sunday School, and that attractive books would be loaned to

them also. "You'll come and get some of those papers and books, won't you?" he said confidently. But again an emphatic "No!" was the boy's only answer. That did seem a little discouraging; but the missionary tried once more. He was a sweet singer, and he thought that he would try the power of music on the boy. After singing a few verses he looked down at the little fellow without a doubt of the result of this trial, and said heartily, "There, we're going to have such singing as that in the Sunday School. Won't you come and hear it and learn to sing for yourself?" "No!" was for the third time the resolute reply. Then the man was discouraged. He had found one inaccessible boy; so he rose from his place on the log to go his way, leaving the boy sitting there. "Say!" called out the boy as the Missionary moved off, "are **you** going to be there?" "Yes," replied the Missionary. "Then I'll come," responded the boy.

This anecdote illustrates the fact that unconscious influence often produces better results than the employment of conscious influence. Both, however, are needed.

Another illustration of the power of good influence is furnished in *The Life of Robertson of Brighton*. In it we are told that a shopkeeper had set up in his room the Vicar's photograph. One day, after Robertson was dead, he pointed

to the photograph, and said, "Whenever I am tempted to do anything wrong, I look at that."

Such is the powerful, and yet subtle, force of unconscious influence that flows out from a man's life. It is the **infectious quality of character**; and is often strong in proportion as it is unconscious. Influence means literally flowing in. Thus the teacher is himself influenced by the inflowing of God's Holy Spirit, and the teacher in his turn passes on the influence to others.

As we have remarked, this power may be conscious or unconscious, voluntary or involuntary. We have already considered unconscious influence, such as flows naturally from a man's life. Let us now turn our attention to the **conscious exercise of it**.

Children are very keen observers, and they have a high ideal for those who teach them, the teacher himself is the best lesson. But if once children see a discrepancy between the teacher's life and what he teaches, it is all up with that man's power as an educator in goodness.

**The child's ideal may not coincide with that of his instructor.** The former may consider smoking or theatre-going wicked. The teacher being ignorant of this fact may unconsciously destroy the child's faith in him, by indulging in what he himself regards as perfectly harmless amusements. A child's moral sense is very tender,

and not always well informed. Consequently the teacher ought to bear in mind the distinction which S. Paul draws between what is lawful and what is expedient. Little feet easily stumble, therefore the teacher should be very careful not "to offend (*i.e.* scandalise) one of these little ones." It is easy to unintentionally outrage a child's moral and spiritual susceptibilities. One ought, then, to turn one's attention to one's influence, and regard it **from the child's point of view**, and judge oneself and criticise one's actions from that aspect.

What we **are**, is of supreme importance if we would exercise influence. But what the **child thinks that we are** is of no less importance.

There is another point worth considering. Let me take an example to illustrate what I mean. A Sunday School teacher finds fault with his class for want of attention to the school prayers. He points out how that inattention dishonours God. He illustrates what he means by describing an interview between one of them and the King, and shows how rude it would be to display inattention when in the presence of an earthly monarch, how much more when addressing the King of Kings. Then when the lesson is over he warns them to be attentive and reverent during the concluding prayers, and thus to display in a practical and concrete form that they have profited

by his instructions. Well, if instead of himself entering into the devotions, he keeps an eye on his pupils, to see how far they have profited by his precepts, what will they naturally think of him? May they not justly accuse him of failing to exemplify, in his own behaviour, the precept which he made the point of his lesson?

The same principle applies to the way in which a teacher handles the Bible. Some allow the children to toss the Book of Books about, and themselves treat it with no very marked signs of respect. Example in this respect forms a very practical object-lesson, which appeals to the eyes, and memories of children, much more forcibly than any mere oral instruction could do.

## XI

### LOVE

THE motive power of Christian conduct is, on its human side, love for Christ. Consequently the most important part of our work is to win the heart of the child for Jesus. That is to say we ought so to "teach Christ" that our pupil's love flows out to his Best Friend. This should not be a difficult task. The affections of children are very tender and susceptible, and they readily respond when any kind of love is displayed towards them. What more inspiring topic then can we have than "Christ's love for children"?

When giving a lesson upon this subject, a teacher illustrated it by means of the well-known picture of "Christ blessing the Children." It will be remembered that one of the mothers is represented by the artist as gently pushing her child up to receive a blessing from the ready hands of the Master. The teacher drew attention to this part of the picture, and said: "That is what I am doing now. I am, as it were, pushing you up to Christ in order that you may receive His blessing." The child's answer was: "If

Jesus were present, I should need no pushing." Yes, they need no pushing. What they do need is that we should, as it were, **lead** them up to Christ. In other words, if we ourselves have found Him, we have but to act as guides, and show Him to the little children whom He loves.

**The teacher must himself have a heart.** If the first great commandment is "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," and if the second is like unto it, namely, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," and if "upon these two hang all the law of the prophets," and if the one new commandment of the New Testament, the one added by Jesus Christ, is thus expressed "A new commandment I give unto you that ye love one another, **as I have loved you,**" then, as we have said, the teacher of Christianity must have a heart. "Love and you can do what you will," said a saintly teacher of old. Love of God, and love of the child, is the beginning and the end of religious education. In dealing with children one needs to remember that each requires his own particular kind of treatment, in every **other** respect, but each responds to love. They have many different individual characteristics, but they all have the same tender and responsive heart. Without love it is impossible to teach, effectively, a religion which consists chiefly of personal love for an Individual. The cold-hearted



teacher can accomplish nothing. Though he speaks with the tongues of men and of angels, though he has the gift of "prophecy" (*i.e.* teaching,) though he understands all mysteries and all knowledge, though he has all faith, so that he could remove mountains, and yet has no love, that love which suffereth long and is kind, which beareth all things, believeth all things, thinketh no evil, hopeth all things, endureth all things, if in short he has not charity, he is nothing as a religious teacher of children.

We need to receive constantly, from the God of Love, whole heartfuls of love, and must pray to the Great Pastor for a share of that Pastor's Heart, which is irresistible when brought to bear upon little children. If we love God, and also love the child, and **display our love for both**, then we shall be in a position to teach effectively, provided that we know definitely **what** we have to teach. Vague sentiment is not sufficient.

When Jesus Christ stood on His trial before the Roman Agnostic, the latter asked Christ of His mission. This was our Lord's reply to Pilate:—"To this end was I born and for this cause came I into the world—that I should bear **witness unto the Truth**" (S. John viii. 37).

We must know what the truth is, if we would teach it, and must have a ready answer to the question "What must I do to be saved?"

## XII

### KNOWING WHAT TO TEACH

SOMEONE defined metaphysics thus—"When one man tries to explain to another what he doesn't understand himself, his subject is metaphysics." The teacher of children must not be metaphysical. He must not only know his subject, but know it so well that he can **make it quite clear** to the child who does not know it. In order to do so it is of little use merely repeating phrases and formulæ, it is necessary to understand the truth itself. To know the truth, and to be able to repeat what others have said about it, are not the same thing at all.

(It is wonderful how one's efforts to teach, reveal the paucity of one's exact ideas of any subject.)

In order to describe clearly, one must understand thoroughly. And in order to picture vividly, it is necessary to see clearly. Therefore **"take heed to the doctrine."** Obviously one cannot cause another to know what one does not

oneself know. The blind cannot lead the blind with any other result than that named by Christ—"both will fall into the ditch."

If you were called to the death-bed of a ten-year-old child, and only had a short time in which to speak to it—what would you say?—

### XIII

## WHAT THE TEACHER GAINS BY TEACHING

OUR Lord has said that anyone giving a cup of cold water only, to one of His little ones, will in no wise lose his reward. We endeavour to place the cup of living water to the lips of the child's thirsty soul. Apart from all question of a future reward, there is a very evident present gain for the teacher.

In the first place the love and gratitude of the child is in itself no mean recompense.

Then there is the great satisfaction felt by those who, at whatever cost, do their duty, and serve God and their generation.

There is the charm too of the work itself regarded as an art. We may feel all the enthusiasm that every true artist experiences in his work.

Moreover the act of teaching, educates the teacher, and his preparation of the lesson benefits himself, more than it will the pupil.

The mere fact of expressing what one already knows of a subject, makes one articulate, as nothing else can. Even in ordinary conversation, the expression of one's thoughts draws up out of one's subconsciousness ideas which before were dormant and inarticulate. Thus does one educate (e-duco = draw out) oneself, in the effort to teach another.

The teacher feels, too, that he must always be learning, and an added interest, and augmented impulse, are thus given to the search for knowledge.

If we turn to the **spiritual sphere**—what can be more obvious than that in endeavouring to lead others upward, we ourselves are induced to advance and rise?

We all know the story of the man who was lost in the snow, and who was on the point of surrendering himself to the fatal craving for sleep, when he stumbled against another who had already succumbed. His efforts to warm and arouse the sleeper, warmed and aroused himself. This illustrates the manner in which the effort to benefit his pupil, acts and reacts upon the teacher himself.

Not being a hypocrite, he enlightens and awakes his own conscience also, when instructing the child with regard to God's laws of right and wrong.

It is difficult to conceive of any respect in which our work does not benefit ourselves. For instance

one learns to look into the soul of men, and of things, and to speak and think "*ad rem ad hominemque*." Day by day a keener, and truer, insight is gained into human nature, and one understands more and more of that nest of paradoxes, that host of incongruities, the human heart.

Not the least of the benefits which the teacher derives from his work, is the practical instruction in the art of government, which the management of a child gives. To be able to rule a Sunday School Class of boys, is to know how to govern in any other department of life.

## XIV

### WHAT IS TEACHING?

THE fact that we can glibly repeat the word, is no proof that we understand its meaning. Words are but counters to represent ideas. What idea does the word "teach" convey?

Every book which deals with the subject of education uses the word, but very few authors pause to define the idea. Yet surely, before proceeding to deal with the subject of teaching, it is necessary to define what the term means. What idea then does the word convey?

When a schoolmaster tells his class to learn up such and such a lesson for next time, he may be fulfilling one of the duties of a schoolmaster, but he cannot be said to be teaching. He is merely commanding them to teach themselves.—**Commanding is not teaching.**

When he hears the lesson in class, if he does nothing more than hear what the boys have taught themselves, he cannot be said to teach them.—**Hearing is not teaching.**

If he lectures upon some subject in such a way that the class learn nothing, he cannot be said to have taught anything, and consequently he has not acted as a teacher.—**Telling is not teaching.**

There are three essentials, a teacher, a lesson, and a pupil to be taught. If the pupil has not been taught anything, the “teacher” cannot be said to have justified his claim to the title, because **a teacher is one who teaches.**

The process by which the lesson is taught is a difficult art, built upon scientific principles. Yet strangely enough there are still many, so-called, “teachers” who have not learned how to teach, and many more who do not even know what the word itself means.

Every teacher in our Public Elementary Schools, on the contrary, has passed difficult examinations, not only in the subjects which it will be his life’s work to teach, but also in the theory and practice of the art of teaching.

We have not, however, yet defined what is meant by the word, which we all have so frequently upon our lips nowadays.

Jacotot explained that “to teach is to cause another to learn.” This is an incomplete definition, because nothing more is implied than a cane and a lesson-book : whereas every good teacher endeavours to dispense with both of these ancient aids to learning. To “cause a pupil to learn” is only



half of the teacher's duty, the other half consists in **teaching**. It is part of one's duty to ensure that one's pupils learn, but the other, and no less important part of one's business, is to **practise the art of teaching**. The writer, when in a certain class, at one of our great public schools, was compelled to learn Euclid. But it was not until he moved up into another class that any attempt was made to **teach** him Euclid. Thus in the former case he was forced to learn by heart certain words, which conveyed no meaning to him; in the latter he was taught to enjoy exercising his reasoning powers, and he acquired knowledge. In the latter case alone was he taught Euclid.

Someone has said that "every **self-educated** man had a fool for his schoolmaster." This is true of those who regularly attended school, rather than of those who did not.

Calling oneself a schoolmaster, and claiming to be a teacher, are not the same as knowing how to teach. There is a vulgar proverb which tells us "not to judge an article by the label on the box."

Professor Hart improved upon Jacotot's definition of teaching, when he explained that it consists in "Causing another to **know**." A better description still, however, would be "taking one living idea at a time, from one's own

mind, and planting it so that it will grow in the mind of another." To teach is not to force another to cram up certain words, but rather to artistically impart living and growing ideas, together with the wisdom to employ those ideas usefully.

The chief difference between the teaching of Jesus Christ, and that of the ecclesiastics of His day, was that Christ implanted germinal thoughts in the souls of men, whereas the Scribes and Rabbis quoted words from the Talmud.

## XV

### TELLING IS NOT TEACHING

To tell may be a part of the teaching process, or again it may not, but in no case can telling be the same as teaching. Trumbull, in illustration of this fact, says: "I, certainly can testify out of my own experience that one of the Godliest and most learned men who ever occupied a place as a Sunday School teacher, was a marked illustration of failure just at this point. That man was a distinguished jurist; one whose praise was in all the churches—and whose memoir is in the Sunday School libraries. He prepared himself most elaborately on his lesson. He came to the class with full notes. He talked wisely, plainly, and directly from the beginning to the end of the lesson-hour, although commonly with his eyes closed, and always without asking any questions. He taught much by his punctuality, and his fidelity, and his Christ-like spirit in their admirable example. He was loved and honoured by his class; and he is remembered by his scholars

gratefully. But if he ever taught a single truth by his telling it to his class—here, in my case, is one scholar who is not aware of it. I do not recall a single fact, a single precept, a single doctrine, taught directly by the words of that Sunday School teacher." Telling a thing is not teaching that thing. It is a mistake to tell a pupil anything whatever that he can be led to find out for himself.

If to tell were the same thing as to teach, how easy would be the work of education! Instead of seven years at a hospital, seven days would be sufficient for the medical student.

How delightful it would be if reading, or reciting, the Catechism once in the hearing of a child, was sufficient to teach the Catechism to that child!

There are many so-called teachers who imagine that the more they tell a child in an hour the more it has learned. The exact opposite, however, is the fact.

Someone after attending a public meeting, at which reporters were present, was very much exercised in mind at the thought that the mind of a reporter must be crowded with a terrible amount of nonsense. But when this benevolent old man spoke to a Press representative on the subject, he discovered that his sympathy was not justified, because "no pressman remembers a

single word of the speeches he reports." How much less will the average child recollect of what he hears, when we bear in mind that, unlike the reporter, he makes no notes, and is not paid to listen!

## XVI

### CO-OPERATION

IF it is impossible to teach unless the pupil learns, it is obvious that the process is a **double** one, and necessitates the conscious, or unconscious, assistance of the pupil. Half the art of teaching consists in securing this co-work on the part of the scholar. To attempt to teach a deaf child, by talking to it, would be a very evident absurdity. And to talk to an inattentive pupil,—one who is not listening,—is no less useless. The moment his attention wanders he has ceased to learn, and until he does attend it is impossible for the instructor to teach him. It is of the very first importance then that the teacher should **secure and retain the attention of his pupil**. In order to do so he must present his lesson in an interesting way. That is to say—in a manner which interests the **child**, and sustains his interest.

Nor is this sufficient, because to interest a child in a subject does not necessarily include the teaching of that subject. The well-trained mind of

an adult may be intensely interested in—let us say—a novel, and yet he may read in such a way, as to remember nothing appreciable of what he has read. In order to learn, **one must pause sufficiently long**, at each idea, to understand it thoroughly, and remember it, before passing on to the next.

The question consequently arises, in what way can one so teach a subject to a child, that one is able to both procure, and sustain its attention, at each point, sufficiently long to cause him to really learn it?

One of the very best ways is to adopt the catechetical method of instruction. Teaching by means of questions interests the child, because he feels that he has an **active part** in the work, and **one which is recognised**. Questioning also **appeals to the curiosity of childhood**. It also enables the teacher to play off one child against another, so as to **make use of the spirit of emulation**. It turns, what would otherwise be a dull lecture, into a game—such as the numerous puzzle games so dear to the young. And lastly,—by means of questions attention is directed to one point at a time, and concentrated upon that single idea, **until it has been learned**.

## XVII

### RESTLESSNESS

ONE of the greatest difficulties that has to be faced, by all who have to deal with children, is their excessive restlessness. They seem to find it impossible to sit still. Hands, legs, heads, eyes, bodies—all seem to exemplify that myth of the ancient philosophers—perpetual motion.

How is this annoying trait to be combated?

The scientific remedy is, not to forcibly drive in the symptoms, but to diagnose the complaint, and **deal with the cause**. Why are young people restless? This tendency of theirs is Nature's method of encouraging exercise, and thus ensuring development. It is a mistake to run counter to Nature and restrain the healthy activity of children. The wise teacher relies upon it to ensure the effort necessary to acquire knowledge. If a child's body is restless it is because no one has found him sufficient employment for his mind. A child cannot sit still for five minutes while an adult pours forth a stream of



words. God has made the young active, and they cannot remain passive without running counter to their natural instincts, and violating God's law. The best way of utilising the energies of children is to set them to work answering questions. These should be difficult enough to require hard thinking, and yet sufficiently easy to reward the pupil's efforts with success.

**Restlessness is energy running to waste.** It is a fault, not in the child, but in him who ought to be employing the pupil's energy usefully. When being artistically questioned in school, or when poring over a puzzle in their play time, children are absolutely still physically. They have no superfluous energy to waste in fidgeting. The most active child has no superfluous vitality, all its powers are concentrated upon the mental effort in which it is engrossed. When a Sunday School class is inclined to let off steam—so to speak—in unlawful ways, the remedy is (not to sit upon the safety valve, but) to turn the steam on to the mental machinery, which turns out ideas. In other words, a restless class is one that is more than ready to do justice to the questioning exercise. All teaching necessitates the co-work of the pupil, because there can be no teaching where there is no learning; learning is an absorbing and healthy exercise, which uses up all the child's energies. If it does not do so, the

fault lies with the teacher, who is allowing force to run to waste. Thus to blame the unfortunate pupil for fidgeting, is to add insult to injury.

The same applies to all bad behaviour of the noisy and mischievous kind. "Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do." Or as someone else expresses it: "The devil tempts a busy person—but an idle person tempts the devil." **Useful employment, rather than unjust punishment, is the scientific remedy for misapplied activity.**

## XVIII

### THE LEAST COMMON DENOMINATOR

IN order to transfer ideas from one mind to another, it is necessary to find a common denominator, between the knowledge of the teacher, and that of the pupil. Like S. Paul, one has to become all things (by turn) to all men, in order to gain them over to one's standpoint, and to enable them to appreciate and accept one's point of view. To the Jew one has to become as a Jew, in order to gain the Jew. To the Greek one must address one's remarks, from the point of view of the Greek, in order that he may be able to follow one's arguments. That is what someone meant when he said that "life resembles a game of dominoes." The teacher must express himself in such terms as are understood by the pupil, and make use of such expressions and ideas as appeal to the latter. That is what we mean by saying that the teacher must "reduce his ideas to the same common denominator" as those of the pupil.

When the said pupil is a child, it is necessary to go further. In order to appeal to the child, one must reduce one's ideas to the **least** common denominator with those of the pupil. It was because he did not do so, that a certain able ecclesiastic failed to teach anything to a churchful of attentive children, whom he thus addressed:—"Children, you are a nebulous mass of latent potentialities!" His sermon, which was carried on in the same strain, was very clever, and most appropriate, except that not a single child had the very least idea as to what the preacher was talking about. Only two things were necessary—namely to reduce what he had to say to its simplest terms, and also to find a common denominator between his own, and his pupil's ideas.

The same fatal error was made by the otherwise able theologian, who, when asked to question an infant school, advanced smilingly into the middle of the room, and let off the following absurdity: "My dears, what is your primary conception of the Deity?"

More to the point was the method adopted by the four-year-old sister of an infant boy, whose parents had just left the nursery in disgust, because they had failed to teach the infant to say "dadda." The little sister sat down beside the discouraged infant, who after all had done

his best to pronounce the—to him—difficult word. After wooing him back to his usual good humour, she said: “Good baby! say coo.” Baby could do as much as that, and responded gladly to the invitation. Then by very small steps, and easy stages, she taught him to say “daddle-daddle,” which was the very utmost of which he was capable. She had found the “least common denominator” between what the infant could do, and what he was in future to be taught to do.

## XIX

### THE RELATION OF ATTENTION TO INTEREST

IN order to be listened to by the student, the teacher must obtain, and keep, the attention of the former. What is attention? In one sense the mind is never inattentive. At all hours of the day the brain is active, and is attending to some idea, or collection of ideas. But it is only when the idea is interesting, that attention can be easily concentrated upon it sufficiently long to grasp it fully, and so to fix it in the mind, as to recollect it afterwards.

When the **very well disciplined mind of an adult** endeavours to concentrate attention upon an uninteresting fact, it needs a constant effort of the will to force the attention back, time after time, after having wandered. Let the reader try to fix his attention, for five minutes, to the stop at the end of this sentence, and he will find it next to impossible to do so, because in itself a stop is uninteresting. For the same reason it is even more impossible for a child, whose powers of concentration are undeveloped, and undisciplined,

to attend, for a whole minute, to a point which lacks interest, **from his point of view**. Therefore, in order to gain, and hold, attention to any point, that point must be rendered interesting to the pupil. I say to the pupil, not to the teacher. What is a bore? He is one who talks of what interests himself, to one who is not interested in what he says. The bore is himself interested, but his hearer is only bored; in other words he feels it a great effort to attend to what is said, and certainly does not learn and remember anything.

The mind of every child is full of thoughts, mostly of the imagination. It lives in a delightful world of make-belief. Troops of fascinating ideas jostle each other, and compete to occupy the mind. It is the teacher's business to wrestle with these thoughts, and drive them out by supplying a **superior** counter attraction. This, of course, can only be done by one who knows what interests children. In fact he must know more. He must know what will interest the individual child with whom he has to deal.

In addition to this, he must vary the interest, and change the thoughts, because children cannot maintain their interest, and concentrate their attention, upon one thought for any length of time, and as soon as attention wanders they have ceased to learn, and consequently the teacher is no longer teaching.

## XX

### CURIOSITY

CURIOSITY, which may be defined as “the hunger of the mind,” is one of the chief characteristics of childhood. The teacher should make full use of this indispensable instinct. In the first place he should raise curiosity, and then concentrate it on the subject in hand. It is impossible to teach without the interest and attention of the pupil, and the best way of securing these is to raise his curiosity in the subject. The child is then anxious to learn what the teacher is eager to teach. Information supplied to those who have no desire for it, is like food forced upon one who is not hungry. The method adopted in the East of pushing pellets of food down the throats of turkeys, in order to fatten them, is a method which should not be employed by teachers when feeding the souls of children. If we would avoid giving our pupils mental indigestion, and a distaste for moral and spiritual food, **we must not force ideas into unwilling minds.**



In order to make the most of the child's curiosity, considerable art and wisdom are needed. This is especially the case when we want to interest him in, what he considers to be, dry and dull subjects.

The religious teacher may do well to take a lesson from the skilled advertiser: the latter uses every means within his reach to force an indifferent public to take an interest in things which he intends to sell to them, whether they want them or not. Let us take an illustration of one of the means employed to raise curiosity, and thus draw the attention of the public to a common-place, and uninteresting statement.

An advertisement appeared which consisted of just a plain representation of an empty frame, without a word of explanation. People wondered what it could mean. Quite a considerable amount of curiosity was raised, and when it was at its height, the same advertisement appeared again, but this time it had the following words printed inside the frame: "**Watch this space.**" About a week later the frame-work appeared for the third time, and inside it a very uninteresting advertisement. Had it not been for the artistic way in which curiosity had been aroused beforehand, people would not have paid any attention to this uninteresting advertisement. By arousing considerable curiosity however, the manufacturer

created a demand for his goods. The teacher has to follow similar methods, in order to tempt his pupils to invest in ideas, which at the outset they do not desire.

I will endeavour, in subsequent articles, to deal with the various ways of rousing interest and curiosity. It is sufficient for the present to merely remind the reader of the **importance** of securing attention.

## XXI

### CURIOSITY MUST BE GRADUALLY SATISFIED

CURIOSITY, when roused, must not be left unsatisfied. Some teachers and preachers start off in such a way, that by their manner, and their opening remarks, they create a craving for information which they do not proceed to satisfy. They raise curiosity and seem to promise much, but one is invariably disappointed. Such teachers put their pupils on their guard against feeling a curiosity, which experience teaches, will be left unsatisfied. Children soon find out that any attention they may give, will not be adequately rewarded. We are all of us justified in feeling some animosity towards one who promises, but does not fulfil.

Huge posters appeared one day in an American city with this legend printed upon them: "**He is coming! Have you seen him?**" A week later these were covered by others which ran thus: "**He has come! and may be seen for one dollar, at the Town Hall, on Saturday at 8 p.m.**" At 8.15 a large and impatient audience watched with intense interest the gradual rolling up of the

curtain. Alas, the platform contained nothing whatever, but a huge notice: "**He has gone,**" and so he had, together with the entrance money paid at the doors.

The people who had thus been cheated once, would take great care to avoid being similarly disappointed again. In the same way children, whose attention has been won under false pretences, avoid a repetition of such a disappointment, by refusing to allow their curiosity to be roused.

Curiosity must be satisfied **gradually**. The teacher should learn a lesson from the novelist. In order to ensure that his book shall be read to the end, the author **carefully husbands** the interest he raises, and satisfies curiosity **little by little**, in such a way that the reader is tempted to read on to the end. The teacher should, in the same way, satisfy the curiosity of the children gradually, and keep the interest going until the end.

The interest of **each lesson** should end naturally at the close of the lesson, but the interest in the **course** of lessons should **grow** with every lesson of the series. In this respect also the teacher resembles the novelist, and similar arts should be employed by both. The most interesting part of every good novel is the latter portion, but few teachers can retain the interest of their pupils towards the latter part of a long course of religious lessons.

## XXII

### THE SOCRATIC METHOD

EVER since the days of Socrates it has been realised that one of the best ways of raising curiosity, and thus securing attention (and then of utilising that attention, for the purpose of teaching) is to ask questions. This is one of the most important devices employed by the modern teacher, and it was the only one used by Socrates of old. This great teacher employed it in order to show the pupil his ignorance, and thus compel thought. If Socrates were to be reincarnated, and to give a lesson to an adult, on the subject of—let us say—insects, he would proceed somewhat as follows. He is—we will suppose—talking to a man whom we will call “X.”

*Socrates*: “You know, I suppose, what an insect is?”

*X*: “Of course I do!”

*S*: “What is an insect?”

*X*: “Well,—how shall I explain? It is a little animal with wings.”

*S*: "I see! Then a bird is an insect."

*X*: "Of course not! An insect is a very small creature."

*S*: "Smaller than a humming bird? In that case many moths are too large to be called insects."

*X*: "An insect is not a bird, it has no feathers."

*S*: "I see, then a Night-moth is a bird, and not an insect?"

*X*: "No! you have mentioned an exception to the rule, it is the only moth I know which has feathers."

*S*: "Well, but you have not made it quite clear to me what an insect is. All you have told me is that it is a small creature with wings, and that usually it has no feathers."

*X*: "An insect is a small creature which breathes through the sides of its body and not through its mouth."

*S*: "I see, then is a tiny fish an insect?"

*X*: "No, an insect is so called because its body is 'cut into' (Latin, *inseco*). That is to say that it consists of three distinct parts, head, thorax, and abdomen. It always has six legs."

*S*: "Ah now, at last, we have a **complete** definition of what constitutes a perfect insect."

This Socratic method of questioning bears little resemblance to the modern teaching device, which has evolved from it.

Socrates always employed sarcasm and irony, and angered his disciples. The modern pedagogue makes his questioning a pleasure to his pupils.

Socrates never told his hearers anything; having succeeded in showing up their ignorance, he left them to find out facts for themselves. The modern questioner's chief aim is teaching.

Socrates questioned only adults. His method would not succeed with children. The ancient philosopher used his interrogations only in one direction and for one purpose, the modern catechist employs his questions in several directions, and achieves a proportionate number of results in consequence.

Let us glance at a few of the uses made of this device (questioning) nowadays.

We may mention, by the way, that the parent, and Sunday School teacher, have a far better field for the use of this device than the day school teacher, because the schoolmaster has so many children in the class.

## XXIII

### VAGUENESS

INDEFINITENESS, on the part of the teacher, cannot tend to produce exact thought on the part of the pupil. The teacher may be vague in two ways. Either he may employ inexact expressions and **indefinite language**, or he may have **vague ideas** in his own mind. It is one of the many merits of the questioning device, that the teacher can discover at once, from the answers received, how far he has succeeded in making himself accurately understood, and how far the ideas he has endeavoured to teach, were sufficiently exact and definite. Any vagueness in the teacher, is at once reflected in the answers given by the taught. The former sees at once whether his **phraseology** was sufficiently simple, and exact, and also how far the **ideas** he has expressed were accurate and clear. The following may be used as an illustration of a vague question, the vagueness being reflected in the answers. A teacher had to give a



lesson on the subject of "Pilate the **Governor**." She began thus: "What was **Pilate**?"

*Answer*: "A man."

*Teacher*: "No! No!! What was Pilate?"

*A*: "A bad man."

*T*: "**NO!!!** Do think before you speak.

What was Pilate?"

*A*: "A Roman."

*T*: "I shall go on asking until you give the right answer. What was—**Pilate**?"

Silence followed, and no further reply could be elicited. Here we have an instance of a vague question, to which several correct answers could be given, and yet none of them be the one which the catechist required. After all, the class could not know that the reply wanted was "Pilate was the **Governor**." Their attempts were not so bad. Pilate **was** a man—not a woman. He was a bad man, not a good one. He was a Roman, not a Jew. The children might have gone on for ages wasting time, and yet have given correct answers. They might have said for instance: "He was a biped—or an animal of the vertebrate genus," in fact the question, as it stands, opens up a vast scope for useless guessing. "What was Pilate?" is a vague question; it might have run—"What **office** did Pilate hold?" This however, would have puzzled small children, because it contains the word 'office' in a connection which is un-

familiar to them. "What was Pilate's profession?" would not have been much better, because the word 'profession' is not one used or understood by children. "What was Pilate's work?" would be a better way of **beginning a series** of questions, on the subject of his official position.

## XXIV

### WHERE AND HOW TO BEGIN

I ONCE listened to a Diocesan Inspector **examining** the upper standards of a Public Elementary School. He asked questions on the subject of "The healing of the ten lepers." For some time all went well, the answering was all that could be desired. But then the examiner asked—"What is a leper?" He received the answer: "**An animal.**" Hurriedly concealing a smile, he continued:—

*Q*: "What kind of animal?"

*A*: "A spotted one" (leopard).

*Q*: "What did Jesus do for these ten lepers?"

*A*: "Healed them."

*Q*: "What did He cure them of?"

*A*: "Spots."

*Q*: "What did one of them do, which the other nine did not do?"

*A*: "Thanked Him."

This was an amusing episode for the Inspector, but a most embarrassing one for the teacher, who,

obviously, had not begun to teach the lesson at the right point. He ought to have **begun** by asking "What is a leper?" He would then have found out how to commence his lesson and where. The same examiner questioned the **top** class of the high school in a Cathedral City, on the subject of 'democracy,' **about which they had been taught.** He asked "What is democracy?" The answer he received was "Government by **demons.**"

These two anecdotes are true—not exaggerated fancy pictures, and they illustrate the importance of beginning to teach a subject at its commencement. To begin anywhere else is to rear an inverted pyramid. What useful purpose can be served by teaching every **other** detail, connected with the miracle of the ten lepers, if the pupils are allowed to imagine that a leper is a wild beast? Of what use is a course of lessons on democracy, if the class are allowed to imagine that King Demos is a demon? No amount of patient teaching can build up, upon such a foundation, a satisfactory lesson on *Vox populi vox dei*.

**It is most unwise to take any previous knowledge for granted.** It is necessary, in teaching, to employ the same arts as those used by counsel, in a Court of Law. The barrister questions his client with two objects in view, (1) to elicit that only which is relevant, (2) to so elicit it that the ideas expressed in the answers

may be consecutive. The thoughts in the mind of his client, and those in the mind of the teacher's pupil, are jumbled up, and need to be sorted and arranged. **The teacher not only arranges the child's ideas, he also clarifies, supplements, and corrects them, by means of questions.**

## XXV

### OPENING QUESTIONS

(THE object of a few preliminary queries is, as we have said, to find out what the pupil knows, in order that the teacher may begin to teach at the correct point.) One should always pass from the known to the unknown, and build up fresh knowledge firmly upon what already exists in the pupil's mind. In doing so, one incidentally **corrects erroneous ideas, and supplements half truths.**

During the process of questioning out of the pupil his little stock of ideas, one is drawing his attention to the lack of additional information. One indicates to him where his exact knowledge ends, and where his ignorance begins. In this way an **appetite is developed in the questioned**, which renders him eager to absorb what the questioner is anxious to impart. We have already spoken of the importance of securing interest and attention, by raising curiosity. The way to do so is by asking questions. It is just

at this point that the teacher differs from the crammer—the artist from the bungler. Children have been called animated question marks—living notes of interrogation. They are naturally curious. Let us make full use of this appetite of the mind, with which Nature has provided them.

## XXVI

### THE INSTINCT OF DISCOVERY AND INVESTIGATION

THE interest and curiosity, raised by each question, should be carried on to the next one (which ought to grow out of its predecessor, and give birth to its successor)—in such a way that curiosity is increased with each question and answer. Artistic and full use must be made of the inquisitiveness of children, which makes them enjoy working out puzzles and conundrums for themselves. Hardly any pleasure so appeals to the child as showing what he can do in this way. The daily press make use of this instinct, by means of puzzle columns for children, in order to sell their papers. **We** use their instinct in order to make children buy our ideas. All knowledge has to be bought, the expenditure of much thinking is necessary to purchase it.

Children have a very genius for discovery, and an insatiable craving for investigation and hunting. It is the **seeking**, rather than the finding



that appeals to them, in the pursuit of the various collecting crazes, which absorb so much of their play time. I remember the disgust I felt, as a boy, when a maiden-aunt gave me a ready-made collection of something which I much enjoyed collecting for **myself**. **She killed my desire to search for these things myself**, by buying that ready-made collection, and also put an end to all interest in what I had already collected. In the same way, children like to find out new **ideas**, and collect **knowledge**, for themselves. Consequently we should question out, and not tell them, facts. Lead them to find out truth, do not supply it ready-made. Questions guide the pupil's search—lead his investigation along the right channel—and help him to **discover** facts which would be uninteresting indeed if we stated them baldly to him, instead of enabling him to find them for himself.

## XXVII

### WORDS ARE NOT IDEAS

WORDS are counters, which are useful **only in so far as they represent ideas**. A word is not an idea. Θεός is no more than a word to those who do not know Greek, and it needs more than a knowledge of Greek in order to understand the idea of "God," which the word Theos is intended to convey. Words are words. Ideas are ideas. To teach a word is one thing. To teach an idea is quite another thing.

What is true of one word, is no less true of a **collection** of words. A string of words is not the same thing as a series of thoughts. To be able to repeat all the words of the Catechism, is not necessarily to understand a single one of the ideas, which it is intended to convey. To teach words is quite a different thing from imparting ideas.

A **book** (which is made up of words) is of no use to anyone, unless the words, of which it is composed, become thoughts by means of the pro-

cess of intelligent study. If I buy a book, and keep it by me, I have acquired no new ideas, unless I read the book. I may buy a vast library, but its contents remain mere words, unless I enrich my soul with thoughts by means of study.

Unfortunately the possession of words (whether in the form of books in one's library, or of phrases learned by heart, and stored in the mind) is a barrier, very often, in the way of acquiring ideas. If I own a book, or my pupil a phrase, we are both of us inclined to rest content with what we have, and thus neglect to turn our words into ideas. The child who can repeat the words of a creed, is apt to rest content with mere words. They may convey no meaning, and represent no ideas to his mind, and yet he may feel that he is in possession of the Truth.

In the same way if a child knows the words of the Catechism, it is difficult to teach him the truths therein contained, because he imagines that he knows these as well. "Please teacher I know all that," says the child who has not acquired one single idea, along with the words he can repeat so glibly.

There is a period in the development of the child when its mind can very much more readily learn words than acquire ideas. During this period one teaches it words and phrases, which, at the time, convey little or no meaning. The

religious teacher causes the child to learn, let us say, the Creed. The mathematical master teaches his pupil the multiplication table. It is only later on, that either collection of words can be translated into the ideas which they are intended to convey. Thus it is necessary to teach mere words. But these words have no use, except in so far as, later on, they are converted into ideas.

It is only by means of questions that the teacher can find out to what extent the words, which the child can repeat, really represent ideas. One of the chief merits of the questioning method of teaching, is, that it deals not in words, forced into the mind from without, but of thoughts, called up from within.

To question is to speak "*ad rem ad hominemque*." No idea becomes the pupil's own, until he has re-thought it, and re-expressed it in his own words.

Let us not be mere jugglers with words, but rather teachers of ideas.

## XXVIII

### AN ILLUSTRATION

THE Church Catechism commences with the question : "What is your name?" and the answer in the book is : "N or M."

In giving a lesson on this first question of the Catechism, the teacher would begin by finding out what ideas, *if any*, the pupils have upon the subject. Consequently he asks : "Do you know the Catechism?" They all say, most emphatically, that they do know it. They feel that they have known it perfectly for years. However, the teacher takes no previous knowledge for granted, and so he asks one of the boys :

"What is your name?"

*Answer* : "N or M."

*Teacher* : "Is that the correct reply?"

*Chorus of voices* : "Yes, sir!"

*Teacher* : "How strange! Does your mother, when she wants you, call out 'N or M come here'?"

*Answer* : "No, sir."

*Teacher* : "Why not?"

*Answer* : "Because she calls us by name."

*Teacher* : "Well, I will ask you again." Addressing another boy, "What is your name?"

*Answer* : "John."

*Teacher* : "Then your name is John, not N or M?"

*Answer* : "Yes, sir."

*Teacher* : "Is the answer in the book wrong then?—What is your name?" (to another boy.)

*Answer* : "Tom."

*Teacher* : "And yours?"

*Answer* : "Henry."

*Teacher* : "And yours?"

*Answer* : "James."

*Teacher* : "Is the answer in the book wrong then?"

(No reply.)

*Teacher* : "Open your Prayer Book at the Catechism! See who can find it first. Now, is it written or printed?"

*Answer* : "Printed."

*Teacher* : "When many books are printed by the same press, are they all different, or all the same?"

*Answer* : "All the same."

*Teacher* : "Is there any printing press in the world which could print in each Prayer Book the name of the boy who will buy it?"

*Answer* : "No, sir."

*Teacher* : "Why not?"

*Answer* : "Because the printer would not know who would buy the books," and "Because every Catechism has to be the same."

*Teacher* : "Very well then, we can understand why you cannot expect, each of you, to have your own name printed in the Catechism. Why did they put 'N or M' as the answer to the question, 'What is your name?'"

(No reply.)

"Well, what does N or M mean?"

(No answer.)

"What does N stand for?—What word, that we have used several times to-day, begins with N?"

*Answer* : "Name."\*

*Teacher* : "Yes, and N.N. would mean, what?"

*Answer* : "Names."

*Teacher* : "Well, M is put instead of N.N.—M is a sort of double N." Well what does the N or M mean, in *your* book John?"

*Answer* : "It means my name or names."

*Teacher* : "Write your name there, and scratch out the N or M."

*Chorus* : "Shall we all do so, sir?"

*Teacher* : "Yes, the N or M refers not only to

\* N or M may be a printer's error for NOM., i.e. NOMEN = name; or it may represent Nicholas or Mary.

John's name or names, but to the names of all of you, doesn't it?"

*Answer*: "Yes, sir."

*Teacher*: "Why does the Catechism begin by asking you your name?"

(No reply.)

"What is the use of names?"

*Answer*: "To call us by."

*Teacher*: "Yes, to distinguish one from another. If I want Tom to answer, I mention him by name. If I require James to do something, how do I show that it is to him I am speaking?"

*Answer*: "Mention his name."

*Teacher*: "Why, then, does the Catechism begin by asking your name?"

(No reply.)

"Well, what does N or M mean in your Catechism Henry?"

*Answer*: "It means Henry."

*Teacher*: "Why does it mention you by name?"

*Answer*: "Because it speaks to me."

*Teacher*: "That is a good answer. When you open your Catechisms, now that you have put your own names at the beginning, you will understand that what follows concerns you—as an individual. John's Catechism teaches John,—Henry's teaches Henry,—Tom's teaches Tom. Religion is a **personal** matter."



Then would follow a series of questions intended to teach that religion is a personal matter, which concerns each individual child's soul, and its relations with a personal God.

The greatest crisis in the life of the child is that at which consciousness is born. Before that (to him) most interesting event, he always speaks of himself in the third person. Afterwards he invariably uses the first person. The Church Catechism teaches us not to ignore this greatest opportunity of impressing upon the child the personal aspect of religion.

The parrot-like repetition of the formula "N or M," or of any other formula, will not achieve the desired result.

## XXIX

### ANALYSING AND BREAKING UP A SUBJECT INTO PALATABLE MORSELS

SOME, so called, teachers throw down before their pupils, a great lump—so to speak—of uncooked food, as if to say “Take it or leave it.” The children always leave it. We are told to “rightly divide the word of truth,” (2 Tim. ii. 15) and to give each child “his portion of meat in due season” (S. Luke xii. 42). To do so one must analyse the subject to be taught, separate from it only so much as the child can be expected to really digest at one time, and then divide that portion up into morsels, sufficiently small to be easily managed and digested.

Having separated off distinct, and clear-cut ideas, from the general mass, it is necessary—by means of questions—to **focus attention on one of these at a time**. Hurry is fatal to the digestion of ideas. One must wait until each is **learned**, before forcing another on the pupil.

The method by which one focuses attention

upon each point, sufficiently long to ensure that that point is thoroughly absorbed, is to ask for the same fact, again and again, but in different ways. In this manner one secures the same answer, but expressed in different forms. For instance (SS. Peter and Andrew were the sons of Jonas): (1) What was the name of S. Peter's brother? (2) of S. Andrew's father? (3) of Jonas' eldest son? (4) of S. Andrew's brother? (5) of S. Peter's father? (6) of Jonas' youngest son?

This practice of analysing, and breaking up a subject into the simplest distinct ideas of which it is composed, is a most valuable training for the teacher's own mind. He not only learns to thoroughly understand a subject, and see all its bearings, and the relation of its different ideas to each other, but he also learns to think clearly, and express himself intelligibly. He sees instinctively to the heart and soul of things. He is not attracted merely to the surface,—the externals—but extracts the very essence of a subject. He learns to be accurate, definite, and thorough. He cures himself of all vagueness of thought, and haziness of expression.

The following criticism of the average Sunday School teaching of the day, appeared in a magazine a few months ago. I do not say that the views expressed are my own, but merely quote the passage as it stands:—

“There (in the Sunday School), under the incomplete control of excellent young people with very hazy notions, they (the scholars) imbibe their morals. A vague Personage, called Jesus, is held up to them to revere and love. To love Him ensures salvation. Of ways and means they are not quite sure, and they do not disturb their serenity by contemplation, and so they drift on.”

This scathing criticism does not apply to any teacher who has had sufficient interest in the art of education, to read this book as far as this point. The passage quoted does, however, indicate to the best of us, what to AVOID.

### XXX

## SEQUENCE OF IDEAS

THE teacher must think consecutively.

Also he must suggest ideas to the pupil in a carefully arranged order. Not only must these ideas be presented in some kind of sequence, but also in the **correct sequence**. Attention is thus focused upon one point at a time, and along a prearranged line of thought, a line of thought which is the correct one.

A scientific author has thus defined the principle which should guide the teacher in the arrangement of his ideas, into their correct order—  
“Whether education or mere instruction be its aim, that book (or lesson) is most likely to succeed, that **leads the student along the same paths as the discoverers must themselves have followed.**”

[“Students should not have facts thrust at them, but should be shown how to find them out. Steps should be made (for them) not simply be taken (by the teacher). Conclusions should be

drawn, not merely stated. Definitions should be led up to, not started from.”]

The teacher is apt to do the very opposite of this, especially if he is a religious teacher.

It is as well to bear in mind what has always been **God's** method of instruction, as displayed in the Bible, and in the Church. The Deity unfolded His lessons very gradually. Under God's guidance, the race learned slowly but surely. The Bible presents a slow evolution of the new out of the old. God's method was thus expressed (Isa. xxviii. 10): “Line upon line, line upon line, here a little and there a little, here a little and there a little, precept upon precept, precept upon precept.” The race was taught one thing only at a time, as they were able to grasp and profit by it. “I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now” (S. John xvi. 12). This was the uttered, or unuttered, thought in the mind of the Deity during those thousands of years, the spiritual history of which is indicated in the Bible. God observed a careful sequence.

Then when the **Great Teacher Himself** appeared, the method of slowly evolving the new out of the old was continued—“Think not that I am come to destroy the law and the prophets. I came not to destroy but to fulfil.”

Most teachers are in far too great a hurry. If man could have had his way, Christ would

have been born before the days of Moses. We are apt to wonder why the Gospel was not preached when the law was given on Sinai. So, too, we are impatient when we find that Christendom does not more quickly convert heathendom. We find it hard to realise that **truths taught too soon are worse than wasted.**

There is a right and a wrong sequence of thought to be followed in the process of opening up truth. Thus it is most important to arrange ones ideas in the correct order. The following rules should be followed—

**One should move slowly and surely from the known to the unknown, from examples to rules, from the concrete to the abstract, from the simple to the complex, from facts to principles.\***

It is not easy to arrange the ideas of a lesson so as to have, not merely a simple process of thought and reasoning, but also the correct sequence of ideas, **from the child's point of view.** Having wisely analysed the subject of the lesson, and broken it up into small, and distinct, and clear thoughts; one must find out their correct sequence.

Then by careful questioning it is necessary to tie down the attention of the pupil to one idea at a time, and so guide its interest and thought

\* See Landon.

that its mind is focused in the right direction, and **kept in the correct groove**. As we have said—this latter is the one along which the race has moved in the discovery of truth. Or to express the same fact in another way—The best sequence of ideas is the one adopted by God, in the teaching of the human race. God teaches slowly and surely, with a very careful regard for the natural sequence of ideas.



## XXXI

### TAKE TIME

[THE teacher, we will suppose, thinks consecutively, and directs the thoughts of his pupil towards one point at a time, along a progressive and orderly sequence of ideas. We will assume also that his arrangement of the thoughts is the correct one.] The next point of supreme importance is to move, from one idea to another, **sufficiently slowly**. It is not only necessary to separate off one point at a time, and isolate it from all kindred ideas, and to tie down the attention of the pupil to that point. It is necessary to **wait**, until that single thought is thoroughly known, and completely mastered and understood. Hurry, in moving on from one thought to another, is a mistake, as fatal, as it is frequent. If when the teacher leaves one point, in order to move on to the next, the pupil has not mastered the idea—has not in fact learned it—then the teacher, so far as the teaching of that **one** idea is concerned, has not justified his claim to be re-

garded as a **teacher**. And if he repeats the same error with every idea of his series, he fails to teach **anything** whatever.

If we may use a metaphor—he must not only **make** little steps for his pupils, he must also lead them to **take** those steps. The fact that the pupil follows the teacher with his mind's eye, while the **latter** takes these little steps, is by no means the same thing as the pupil taking the steps himself. Some children climb up the thorny and steep ascent of knowledge, only in the same way that Mark Twain went up some of the Alps. He stretched himself at full length at the base, and watched his agent climb up. He ascended by deputy. He climbed up only by telescope.

The only way of ascertaining whether—and how far—the pupil is learning, is by testing his capacity to answer any, and every question, that he may be asked, upon each step taken in the lesson.

## XXXII

### LACUNÆ

GREAT care should be taken to avoid leaving **gaps** in one's chain of ideas, when teaching. The strength of a chain of arguments, or of questions, is equal to that of its **weakest** link. To omit one such link is to make a break which is fatal.

I once knew a tradesman who had made a fortune, and spent much of it in trying to prove that he was descended from a certain nobleman. He traced his own pedigree back, for a couple of generations, and he also followed the said nobleman's genealogical tree up from its source, to the point at which the last member of the family went abroad, and disappeared. He never found the link between where the earl's family tree ended, and where his own began, but he conveniently ignored the missing link. In teaching, the same kind of mistake is sometimes made, with the result that the teacher leaves his pupils behind, at the point where the missing link occurred. **There may be no gap in the teacher's line of**

thought, but if the pupil fails to see the connection between one point and another, disastrous results inevitably follow for the latter.

Let us take a simple illustration, in explanation of the effects of thus leaving gaps in the line of thought.—A teacher, when giving a lesson on faith, discovered that his pupils had absolutely no idea of what the word meant. If asked what faith was, they replied “belief,” and when asked what belief was, answered “faith.” So in order to make its meaning quite clear and definite, the instructor gave the following illustration :

*Teacher* : “If your mother said that there was jam in the cupboard, **would you believe her?**”

*Answer* : “Yes, sir.”

*Teacher* : “Well, that is faith! Now answer me—what is faith?”

*Answer* : “Jam in the cupboard.”

The teacher had failed to show the connection between his illustration, and the thing which it was intended to illustrate. He had omitted several links, in what ought to have been a long chain of leading questions. Every thought ought to have been linked on to its predecessor, and also on to its successor.

A break in the series is as disastrous as the breaking of a coupling chain, between a string of railway carriages and the engine. Many a teacher starts off, on his mental journey, without

having taken care to find out that the coupling chain, between him and his pupils, is attached. The result is that he speeds away, and leaves his class behind. Nothing but constant questioning can ensure that the children are following the teacher. **"There may be no gap in the teacher's train of thought, but it is necessary that there be none in the scholar's comprehension of it."**

It is by means of questions that one can make sure that one's teaching is not too rapid—too difficult—or too vague. The answers received very soon point out how far one is being followed, and one can regulate one's pace accordingly. If one has left a gap in the series of ideas conveyed to the children, questions soon indicate the chasm.

### XXXIII

THE RATE AT WHICH A CLASS CAN  
BE TAUGHT IS NO GREATER THAN  
THE PACE AT WHICH ITS SLOWEST  
MEMBER CAN LEARN

To question the smartest boy in a class, as fast as he can be induced to answer, is to leave the rest of the class hopelessly behind. Nor does the smart and clever boy really **learn** anything, because he has not sufficient time given him to digest the ideas which he conceives. A good teacher is **slow to accept answers**. He waits until the dumbest pupil has learned the idea called forth by the question. To hurry fussily on, from point to point, is a common mistake made by ignorant teachers. What one ought to do is to ask each question calmly, and wait before accepting an answer, and then take care that it is not only the quickest, who is ready with a reply, but the slowest also. The object of questioning a class is to ensure that sufficient thought is concentrated, **by each pupil**, upon every idea in the lesson. It

is necessary to focus effort, and attention, upon each point, sufficiently long to ensure its being learned, not merely understood.

Another object of questioning is to lead the pupil to discover facts for himself. It is not the same thing for the pupil to allow someone else to do the discovering. What we discover for ourselves we love with the intense love of the discoverer. Ideas to which we personally give birth are loved with a maternal affection. It is a personal matter, consequently it is by no means satisfactory to allow one boy to do all the answering.

Thus the pace of a class, like that of a fleet, is equal to that of its slowest unit. The rate at which the **class as a whole** can be taught, is no greater than the rate at which the slowest member of it can learn, and to learn he must not merely discover the answer to the question, he must also pause long enough to understand that discovery, and fix it in his memory.

“Take one step onward”—said a seeker after truth,—“take one step onward, and **secure that step.**” Most of the discoveries that the questioning spirit of the human race has made, have been allowed to slip back again into the limbo of the unknown. Humanity has lost, and found, every truth, several times over, before it has become the permanent possession of the race.

Let us not be content with leading the pupil to discover. We must cause him to **learn, and remember** the ideas called up by means of our artistic questioning. "Why do you take the trouble to impress a fact a hundred times over, upon the dull brain of that idiot?" remarked an impatient critic. "Because" was the reply, "if I only impressed it ninety-nine times I should lose all the results of my labour."



## XXXIV

### HOW TO QUESTION

As has been already said, one object of questioning is to focus the attention upon one point at a time. Obviously, then, in order to focus the child's thoughts upon that single, distinct idea, **the question must be so definite, and precise, as to admit of only one answer.** Such queries as "What was Pilate" diffuse the thoughts of the pupil, instead of concentrating them, because many replies would correctly answer it.

A good question must be simple, clear, and direct, in its phraseology, and also in the idea for which it asks the child.

In order to achieve success much thought is necessary, much sympathy, and considerable knowledge of the ideas of the child: moreover, nothing can teach one how to wisely employ the questioning device, but practice and experience.

I would advise constant and all round pruning. Prune your ideas of the lesson, until nothing remains but what is very much to the point, and

wholly relevant. Next arrange what questions you intend to ask, pruning out those that are not to the point. After this, prune each question of unnecessary verbiage, and circumlocution, then arrange your queries in the correct sequence.

With this stock-in-trade begin the lesson, taking care to break up each question, as much as may be required, into **simpler ones**. With regard to this latter point, the problem is to make each sufficiently difficult, to ensure the necessary effort on the part of those who have to answer, and at the same time to avoid making the questions so difficult that the pupils become discouraged, or over-strained. No useful purpose is served by exhausting or baffling the answerer, and **nothing is gained by making the exercise so easy that little or no thought is necessary**. Questions such as:—"Man consists of body, soul, and spirit; —what does man consist of?" err in that they call for but a small exercise of memory, and none of thought.

Those questions which demand merely the answer "Yes" or "No" are, as a rule, to be avoided, because they lead to thoughtless guessing. Many children only attempt to answer such questions after someone else has guessed wrongly. They know that if "No" is wrong, "Yes" must be right, and *vice versá*. Moreover such questioning gives the teacher no idea as to how far

the children are understanding, and following him.

With regard to difficult questions, avoid asking for a definition, except occasionally, when, by careful questioning, you have led the minds of the pupils up to the point where they may be reasonably expected to give that definition. Children are not good at defining, and we ought not to expect it of them. If you yourself try to define in words what a spiral staircase is, you will understand the nature of the child's difficulty. Even well-educated adults cannot, upon the spur of the moment, accurately define in words ideas which are quite familiar to them. Still less can children express themselves adequately in this way. The best plan is for the teacher to draw out sufficient knowledge, from his pupils, to enable them to **understand** the definition, and then to do the defining himself. The children may then learn the definition by heart. Children lack the necessary power of expressing what they know, and also invariably think in the concrete, rather than in the abstract. If one calls for a definition of—sin, for instance, the kind of answer one gets is "Stealing," "Telling lies," and so forth. If one does get a clear and satisfactory definition, it is a parrot one learned off by heart.

In questioning on the catechism, if it is ideas, and not words, that one wishes to elicit and teach,

it is useless to accept replies in the words of the book. Words are not thoughts. In order to ensure that a pupil has really thought out, and learned a truth, it is necessary to call up the same **idea** expressed in different ways. Like a carpenter driving in a nail, one must hammer away at one idea at a time, until it is driven well home.

In conclusion, very much depends upon the **manner** of the Catechist. **The questioner should be alert, interested, encouraging, sympathetic, and calm** (not hurried and fussy). His attitude of mind should be that of a lover of children, who is engaged with them in a very interesting and important pastime. He should not resemble the hostile counsel, who worries the witness on the other side by asking awkward questions, in a terrifying manner. Nor should he present his questions in the same way that the old-time highwayman pointed his pistol. A small child being asked the question: "Who killed King Charles?" burst out crying and said: "Please, sir, it wasn't me."

By the way. If the teacher can persuade the **children to ask** questions, very much will be gained, provided that they are relevant to the lesson, and are asked in the right spirit. All the discoveries, in every field of thought, have been the result of the questionings of enquiring minds. The mind of every child is full of curiosity. It

is as well that they should take their questions to a believer and a friend, and receive straight and candid answers to them.

It is pathetic to contemplate how very much the majority of children lose by associating with adults who either will not, or cannot, satisfy the children's thirst for information. It is impossible to estimate the extent to which every child has had his eager questions flung back in his face, with the remark "Don't bother."

It is no less sad to think of the foolish, and misleading answers, we all of us received when we were children. **Let us carefully avoid telling our pupils anything which they will have to unlearn in after life.** Their craving for facts should be met on our part by a straightforward effort to supply them, so far as we are able to do so. The God of Truth does not wish us to lie on His behalf. It may sometimes be wise to withhold the answer to a child's question, but it can never be advisable to deceive him with regard to it.

## XXXV

### IDEALS

If any teacher, or parent, has read this little book as far as this point, he will probably agree with the author that teaching is a great art, which ought to be carried on upon scientific principles. We are not of the number of those who are **content with merely holding an important office**, or filling a responsible position. We regard it to be no less important to **have some idea of how to fulfil the duties of that position**. But alas there are many parents and teachers who are quite content with the mere position, and do not study how to do justice to the opportunities and responsibilities which that position entails.

How often has one heard people imply that any fool can be a teacher, without any previous study or preparation whatever. It is frequently said of unfortunate women, who have been left without means of subsistence—"Poor thing, I suppose she will have to be a governess." A

knowledge of the subjects to be taught, and knowledge and experience of the art of imparting information, these are not apparently regarded as important. We, however, who strive to do our Master's work, remember that He spent thirty years in preparing for three and a half years' teaching. We do not wish to "give to God that which costs us nothing" (2 Sam. xxiv. 24). Rather we are willing to spend, and be spent, for the souls which Jesus Christ came to save. It may be that we have yet much to learn, both of our message, and also of how to deliver it. But at least we can say that "whatsoever our hands find to do we do it with our might" (Eccles. ix. 10). We have learned, in the expensive school of experience, that **our work is worth as much as it costs**, in thought and prayer, **and no more**. It is very true of teaching that **what costs nothing is worth nothing**.

Moreover it is **thoroughness** which makes our work so fascinating. We feel that here we have ample scope for all the powers which God has given us. And we are finding out what a joy it is to serve God and humanity. Here is an object in life which has nothing paltry or selfish about it. Here is a labour of love which is worth living for. We can sympathise with him who wrote "Blessed is he who has found his work! Let him ask no other blessing." Apart from the religious aspect

of our employment, we have joined the great brotherhood of true artists—men and women who live grandly for an ideal—an ideal which is ever rising. It is because we are never satisfied with our achievements, or rather because we realise that teaching has infinite possibilities, that we are so fascinated by it. There is nothing paltry about the material upon which we work—the human soul—and the finished article is nothing less than “The measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.”\* The sculptor, the painter, the builder, the poet—these all work for time—we for eternity. They strive to depict beauty of form and colour, in stone or on canvas. We build up the “beauty of holiness” in the heavenly souls of children. If before we begin our work, it can be said of the children, by One who knows, “Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven” what may He not say, when, at the Great Day, we stand before Him and say: “Behold, I and the children which God hath given me” (Heb. ii. 13).

Our instructions are: “Be ye perfect as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.”† This is the ideal at which we aim, and yet never reach. But at least we aim high. Like S. Paul, we have to confess, “Not that I have already attained or am already perfect,” but we add with him, “I press onward.”‡ Perfection is our unreached mark, and

\* Eph. iv. 13.      † S. Matt. v. 48.      ‡ Phil. iii. 12.



although we can never actually reach it, yet every effort we make brings us a little nearer to it. Our efforts to achieve perfection resemble our attempts to solve one of those problems in mathematics, the answer to which can never be finally arrived at. Every figure that we add, however, brings us a little nearer to the exact answer.

We are artists who have to deal with a precious, and sensitive, and delicate material—the soul of a little child. As true artists ourselves, we can sympathise with the great sculptor Thorwaldsen and his ideals. When he felt the freshness of his conception leaving him, he remarked to a friend: “I have done my best work, I shall never have a great idea again.” His friend asked in surprise:—“Are you not satisfied with your last achievement?” “Yes,” replied Thorwaldsen, glancing at his statue of Christ, “I am, and that’s the point. Until now I have never been satisfied, my ideas have always been far in advance of my execution. It is so no longer. I shall never have a great idea again.” As soon as a man becomes satisfied with what he has done, he has ceased to improve, and has begun to degenerate. If we are satisfied with ourselves, or with our teaching, let us give place to younger men and retire. If we have outlived our ideals, we have also outlived our usefulness as teachers of children. They are full of lofty aims, they dream of achieving,

what may seem to us, the impossible. If we have lowered our standard in discouragement, we have ceased to be able to lead others upward. Let us not set up to be leaders, unless we can go before our flock. Let us not pretend to lead the way if we are not ourselves prepared to advance.

## XXXVI

### HOW TO DEAL WITH ANSWERS

IF the meaning of a question is clear, and the idea called for such as the children are able to supply, there are sure to be answers. The problem now arises, how to deal with them. If teaching is a dual process, of which the pupil's share is at least as important as the teacher's—if, that is to say, the co-work of the scholar is absolutely necessary to ensure that he learns—it follows that **answers are quite as important as questions**, if not more so. We have already considered the subject of questioning, let us now turn our thoughts to the proper method of dealing with answers. More teachers fail in the way in which they deal with replies, than they do in the manner in which they put queries. In order that the pupil may understand what kind of replies are expected of him, his instructor must have a clear and definite idea of what species of answers to encourage.

In the first place, stimulate all answering by

showing approval, and recognising the effort put forth by the child.

In the next place, do not blame a child for giving a wrong **answer**, unless you are sure that the fault was not in the **question**. Make the most of all replies which display thought and effort. Thus, to return to the story of the teacher whose subject was "Pilate the Governor," when in answer to the question "What was Pilate?" the reply was elicited "A Roman," the instructor should have said "Quite right," and then have put another question, the definiteness of which would have called forth a more definite reply.

Insist upon the answers being **exact**. Discourage vagueness and slovenliness. Do not accept half-formed ideas, indefinitely expressed. Exactness of thought is necessary. Recognise what was to the point in the answer, then, without repeating the question, ask another child for a correct reply. For instance:—

Q: "**Where** was Bethlehem?"

A. "Jesus Christ was born there."

Q: "I did not ask **what took place** there. What did I ask?" etc.

Insist upon **completeness**, so that all that is asked for in the question is given in the reply. Careless children, or those who are lazy, often give just a mere hint, as to what they know in the way of answer, and thus waste time by

necessitating additional questioning. Pass over such replies, and obtain correct and complete ones from another pupil.

Discourage answers which give **more** than is wanted. Some children instead of merely giving what was asked for, go on to show how much they know about the subject. This kind of thing should be nipped in the bud, for the same reason that in a Court of Law the barrister checks anything of the kind in the witness under examination. In the first place one needs to concentrate attention upon one point only at a time, and in the second place, time is wasted by what nearly always ends, if it does not begin, in digression from the line of thought of the lesson.

**The communicative child should not be snubbed** into silence, but asked to repeat the question, and then give the correct answer. For instance, if the lesson is on the subject of the **fulfilment of prophecy** (as displayed in the fact that Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem), one might ask:—"Where was Jesus Christ born?" *Answer*: "In Bethlehem, in a stable, because the inn was full of people who had gone there to be enrolled for the taxing which—" etc. The latter part is mere digression, and leads the thoughts away from the point—which is, that it was at Bethlehem that Christ was born.

**Answers should be given promptly, other-**

wise attention flags, and thoughts wander. Smartness and interest go together. It is necessary to be very wide awake in order to learn. Let the pupils be kept up to the mark, and be encouraged to give brisk replies.

Looseness of attention, inexactness of thought, lack of effort, and intellectual sauntering, spoil any chance of rapidly acquiring exact knowledge. Children need bracing up, and the questioning should be rendered inspiring. **Effort** is the great thing needed, and this is not to be secured, for any length of time, without encouragement, sympathy, and keenness on the part of the questioner. Praise and blame, both implied and expressed, are very necessary with children.

Often the teacher destroys all chance of receiving satisfactory replies, because **he himself hurriedly supplies the answers** that do not come rapidly from the pupils, and thus teaches them not to trouble themselves to think.

In conclusion, it is of no use trying to elicit facts which the children do not know, and cannot be led to discover for themselves, as, for instance, the length of the Sea of Galilee.

## XXXVII

### CLASS TEACHING

**THERE** are two ways of teaching a class, a right and a wrong way. Let us take the **latter** first.

Questions are asked in such a manner that only **one** child at a time need attend, all the others idle until their turn comes round. The children are questioned **always in the same order**, so that every pupil knows when his turn will come. In a class of 40 boys  $\frac{22}{40}$  of the time of each pupil is wasted.

If it is a set lesson upon which questions are being asked, the answers have been learned **verbatim**, out of a book. During an English History lesson one of the boys was absent. Each student had only troubled to learn up the answer that would fall to his share. When, therefore, it was the turn of the absent boy to reply to his question, there was an awkward pause. The "teacher" repeated the question: "Who signed Magna Charta?" At last the boy next to the empty space on the form answered: "Please sir the boy who signed Magna Charta has left the room."

On the other hand, the man who knows how to teach every child at the same time, and question

each simultaneously, merely employs a very simple device, namely an **habitual show of hands**, on the part of those who think they know the answers. Every child who is ready with a reply, holds up his hand **instinctively**. Thus the teacher can see, at a glance, how many of his pupils have listened to, and understood, his question, and thus **he employs every child simultaneously**.

Then, in a brisk and cheery manner, he goes from one to another for an answer, taking care that no one shall have any idea whose turn it will be next. If he notices any inattention, he at once asks the culprit the next question, and if he catches any pupil holding up his hand, without having thought of an answer, he points out that such deceit is an acted lie. In this way he plays upon the whole instrument, so to speak, whereas by the old method the "teacher" was, as it were, playing with one finger only at a time. There is as much difference between the two kinds of questioning, as there is between a grand symphony, played by a master upon the entire organ, and the performance of a little child who only uses one finger, and touches only one note at a time. By means of a show of hands, every child is caused to work, and to think out each answer for himself there can be no inattention. Thus **every moment of the time is employed usefully, in teaching every pupil simultaneously**.



Another advantage is that full use may be made of the spirit of emulation. There is a keen competition, on the part of each child, to find the answer, before anyone else has thought of it.

In this way—by means of a show of hands—the teacher can see in a moment if any member of the class is unable to keep pace with the others. From the beginning to the end of the lesson, it is the **whole class simultaneously** that one is dealing with, and not merely one at a time. During the asking of the review questions, at the end of the lesson, every hand should go up, as if every child was worked by the same mechanism—I mean as if the class were an undivided whole, all moved by one common impulse, so as to act in perfect unison, like the movements of a well-drilled company of soldiers, whose motions are simultaneous.

In receiving answers the teacher does not treat every child in the same way. Each needs its own particular kind of management. He deals with the answers of each child in a manner suitable to the individual case. Thus—to quote Landon—“he spurs the indolent, stimulates the sluggish, challenges the inattentive, restrains the forward, controls the rash, exposes the careless, encourages the timid, and helps the dull.” His is a great art, and like every other art, needs much study and experience.

## XXXVIII

### FIXING DEVICES

IF at the end of a lesson the pupil fails to remember what he has been ‘taught,’ it is wiser to ask oneself why one has failed to cause him to remember it, than it is to lay the blame upon the pupil. It is doubtless his business to remember, but it is also the teacher’s duty to cause him to recollect. Other things being equal, **the lesson will be remembered only so far as it has been taught with that object in view.**

A bright and intelligent child, during the excitement of the chase after new ideas, is apt to behave like a fox when it gets into a hen-house. The fox catches and kills more than it can eat or digest. By means of added questions, one ensures that an idea once grasped by the pupil, is not let go until there remains no danger of vagueness, or misconception. And in addition, one must assure the **remembrance** of the idea, as well as the comprehension of it. If we may take an analogy from the art of the photographer, there must be

a fixing process. The teacher's art resembles that of the photographer in this, that every preceding process is useless, unless the impressions are fixed and rendered permanent by a fixing process. Failing this they are sure to fade rapidly. The very same light which created the picture, will so overlay it with added pictures that nothing but a blank will remain.

One of the best of fixing devices is **artistic repetition**, by means of questioning. The same ideas are drawn out in somewhat different ways, and by means of somewhat different queries. It is during this process that those children whose memories are more retentive than their brains are active, can come to the fore and show what they can do.

It is by review questions that isolated ideas are arranged into a consecutive series. The pearls of thought are—as it were—strung upon a thread, so that they are not lost. By means of the association of ideas, each individual thought may be called up by the mind when required. In order that details may be easily remembered, they must be connected by an obvious thread of association, running through the centre of each.

And lastly, review questioning enables the preceptor to give each thought its true perspective. All the errors of Christendom are due to a lack of proportion. Every heresy is the distortion of

a truth. It is this basis of truth in every heresy which renders it so dangerous. Let us remember then, that if we are not very careful, our pupils will go away, after the lesson, with a distorted view of the truths we have taught them.

(The reader will have noticed that there is a good deal of repetition in this book. The author has designedly repeated himself for the reasons above mentioned.)

## XXXIX

### GOD AS TEACHER

ANY person who is ignorant of the art of teaching, and devoid of imagination, and sympathy, would inevitably, after watching a skilled teacher at work in an infant school, come to two erroneous conclusions with regard to the methods employed. He would criticise the teacher's procedure thus: "**Why waste so much time asking questions**, and eliciting answers, why not tell the children the facts straight away and pass on to the next point?"

Another fault, that an elderly and childless person, (if he does not understand children), would inevitably find with an infant-school teacher who knows the laws of development of the infant mind, would be—"Why express oneself in such a **childish and incomplete manner?**—the teacher must be a fool to use such baby language in this twentieth century."

But a study of the Old Testament proves conclusively that **God's method** of teaching the

human race, **when in its infancy**, resembled very closely the best infant-school teaching of to-day. In other words, we have only recently adopted in our baby schools, God's methods of teaching the human race, when it was intellectually, morally, and spiritually in its infancy. Our missionaries too are only just beginning to copy the **divine method**, in their dealings with the childlike, not to say infantile, minds and souls of ignorant savages. The Old Testament teaches us that God educated the chosen people by means of **questions**. He gave them a spiritual and moral inquisitiveness, a tendency to search for the truth.

This questioning spirit, which God implanted in the race, He did not satisfy fully and hurriedly and thus destroy—like the ignorant teacher of the present day who will not pause to receive a reply. Instead of at once answering these questions miraculously, God **led men to find for themselves** the partial answers. His method was the reverse of the cramming system.

**We** would have given the Gospel message to Abraham—nay to Noah—with the inevitable result that the Good News would have suffered the fate of all knowledge which is supplied too soon—it would have been utterly wasted. We would not have had the patience to wait.

God was (so to speak) for ever saying to His pupils of old "I have many things to say unto

you but ye cannot bear them now." God directed the search for truth, and helped mankind to find out for himself the answers to the deep questionings of the soul.

God was careful, in asking His questions, to begin at the very beginning of His lesson, and each question was born of the answer which preceded it.

The series of questions, and their answers, did not proceed always in an uninterrupted series. There had to be constant revision. New lessons had to wait, when old ones had been forgotten, and even the very newest lesson was expressed, not in the vocabulary of the Almighty, but in the lisping phrases, and halting answers, of the pupils themselves.

We must realise this if we would teach "Genesis" to children. We must have a sane conception of proportion, and of the gradual growth of inspiration.

## XL

### GOD'S USE OF OBJECT-LESSONS

THE Almighty might, conceivably, have taught mankind divine truth by means of a book, dropped, **ready-made**, from Heaven to Earth. But He did not choose this method.

Or our Heavenly Father might have revealed Himself by means of a theology, carved in granite, and expressed in a language easily understood by all. But God did not choose this method of revelation.

Or yet again God might, had He so desired, have shouted out from Heaven, the facts about Himself, and man's destiny, etc. But it is evident that this was not God's method of instruction.

Some have ventured to explain in what ways God **ought** to have taught His children. For ourselves we are sure that, instead of speculating, as to how the Almighty might have taught mankind, it is of more practical utility to form an accurate notion as to **how He actually did**, and does teach us.



Whether we go to Nature, or to the Bible, or elsewhere,\* for divine truth, it is evident that it is presented to us in the form of Object-Lessons. God teaches mankind to-day, as He has always taught us, by means of illustrations, rather than by truths—nakedly expressed. God has always taught by means of concrete instances, rather than by abstract principles. The Almighty employs parables, in preference to sermons, history and biography rather than lists of rules, examples rather than precepts. Whether we go to Nature or to the Bible, or elsewhere, for our instruction, we find the same general method adopted by our Heavenly Father. Take for instance the Bible—it consists for the most part of object-lessons, and truth is nearly always embodied in a tale. We are presented with living and **growing** truth, in preference to cut-and-dried dogma. God's method has, obviously, always been to lead mankind by easy stages, from the known to the unknown, by means of picture teaching. Our Father has adopted the illustrative method of education. The Bible is full of metaphor, allegory, imagery, type, simile, parable, etc. By means of figurative language, and the vivid presentation of instructive lives, we have received the truth in such a form that it is **alive and always growing**. We learn through the eye—so to speak—the ever-growing truths of

\* History, or the soul of man.

revelation, which refuse to be embalmed once for all in phrases.

Well the Bible is not only a book of texts, from which to gather spiritual truths, it is also a text-book from which we **teachers learn the divine method of teaching.** It is itself an object-lesson which teaches us how to teach, namely by means of illustrations (and questions).

## XLI

### BIBLE ILLUSTRATIONS

THE whole Levitical constitution (with its outer court, its Holy Place, its Holy of Holies, its High Priest, its Sacrifices, and all its ordinances) was designed to teach through the **eye** (Heb. ix. 9). All these things were outward and visible signs of inward and spiritual realities.

The methods adopted by the prophets were very similar to those used by the priestly class. Thus Jeremiah breaks in pieces a potter's vessel, that he may illustrate and enforce the fact that the people would be thus broken and destroyed (xix. 1-11). He wears a yoke, himself a prophecy and a parable of their approaching bondage (xxvii. 2, xxviii. 10). He redeems a field, in pledge of a redemption in store for all the land (xxxii. 6-15), and these examples might be infinitely multiplied.\*

These prophets were eminently "seers" rather than hearers. The message from God came to

\* See Trench on "The Parables."

them in visions, rather than in the form of verbal messages. The phrase "Thus saith the Lord" must not be taken too literally. Even in our matter of fact twentieth century we use expressions which imply that, as Bunyan expressed it, Eye-gate is wider open than Ear-gate, and impressions to be realised, made real, must be seen rather than heard. When we have spoken to others of something which is not very easily understood, we are in the habit of asking "Do you see?" "Do you see what I mean?" To see a thing is to understand it, and in order to vividly describe anything, we must be able to see it with our mind's eye, while we are describing it.

But to return to God's method of teaching, as displayed in the Bible, Jesus Christ said "I am the way the truth and the life." He was the truth personified. Thus the truth was presented, not in the abstract, but in the concrete. Not on paper, but in a Person. Christ was embodied doctrine—the **Living Truth**. The very centre and essence of the Bible is a Divine Life, the highest and most glorious of all Object-Lessons.

Children, and the uneducated, cannot think in the abstract, they must have the concrete, and however unable to focus their attention upon **what they hear**, in the way of lecture or sermon, they never cease to take a lively interest in **what they can see** of the life of the religious teacher.

Humanly speaking, Jesus Christ taught far more by His example than by His precepts, and His sway in the hearts of men to-day is due to what **He was and is**, rather than to what **He said**. Christianity consists chiefly in devotion to a Person. It was for this reason, perhaps, that the Great Teacher spent thirty years out of thirty-three and a half at the carpenter's bench—apparently in silence, so far as preaching was concerned ;—yet those thirty years of silent example have inspired countless millions to struggle on hopefully, and heroically, in the humdrum round of monotonous toil, in a way that perhaps many sermons from the sacred lips—sermons upon the dignity of labour—never could have accomplished.

## XLII

### JESUS CHRIST'S ILLUSTRATION OF THE SPIRITUAL BY MEANS OF THE MATERIAL

(OUR Lord was Himself an Object-Lesson.) In addition to setting an example, however, He went about teaching **orally**. What was His method? We are told that "Without a parable spake He not unto them" (S. Mark iv. 34). Every miracle, too, was an acted parable—or Object-Lesson. Speaking generally, His was Picture-Teaching. It was to the eye, rather than to the ear, that the Great Master-Teacher appealed.

If the lesson was given on the hillside, the lilies, grasses, birds, seeds, sheep, goats,—in fact, anything that caught the eye—was used as an illustration, and served as a picture, or object-lesson, to render clear and luminous the difficult truths of Religion. If the lesson was given on the shores of the Galilean Lake, then the nets, fishes, storms, etc., furnished illustrations. In the street He would call for a penny, and give an object-lesson upon that, or illustrate His teaching by means of the children's games,\* etc. In the Temple or the Synagogue word-pictures, metaphors, allegories, etc., were more numerous, but

\* S. Matt. xi. 17, and S. Luke vii. 32.

even there the Pharisee and the Publican, as they stood and prayed, or the widow woman as she cast her little savings into the treasury chest, or the man with the defective physical faculties—all served the Great Teacher's purpose, and helped to illustrate His lessons.

**Thus by means of the visible, Christ explained the invisible.** ["The invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made" (Rom. i. 20.)] **The spiritual was illustrated by means of the material.** Jesus Christ was the Lord and Master of the latter, no less than of the former. The Author of both illustrated each by means of the other. The Material and the Spiritual had both emanated from the same Divine Creator, and He employed the one department of His works to shed light upon the other. By thus making use of "Likes" the Great Teacher taught mankind to realise the "Naturalness" of the "Supernatural," and the "Supernaturalness" of the "Natural." This He could do because both are equally the creation of the Supreme Being. No wonder that "the common people heard Him gladly,"\* for, "He spoke as one having authority and not as the Scribes."† The Great Inventor was describing His own inventions—so to speak.

\* S. Mark xii. 37. † S. Matt. vii. 29, and S. Mark i. 22.

If the modern teacher of Theology, or of Natural Science, cannot see the **harmony** between what have been wrongly called the "two worlds," the fault is in the student, and not in the phenomena which he studies. He must have misread the facts of either, or both, or have drawn erroneous deductions from them.

The more he specialises in the one department, the less is his opinion worth in the other. God alone—the Author of both—can see the extent of the harmony, which really exists, between the Spiritual and the Material—the two creations of the One Mind.

The tendency of modern scientific thought is to see more and more **unity** in the laws of Nature; and the deepest spiritual thinkers trace the same "oneness" in Spiritual phenomena, and the laws which govern them. **Those who know most about the "two,"** realise that they are really one—or at least that they are obviously the creations of One Mind.

"The best minds of the future are to be neither religious minds defying scientific advances, nor scientific minds denying religion, but minds in which religion interprets and is interpreted by science, and in which faith and inquiry subsist together and reinforce one another."\*

\* Bishop Gore of Birmingham.



## XLIII

### THE USES OF ILLUSTRATIONS

ILLUSTRATION is one of the most effective, and interesting, of all teaching devices. But in order to be of any use, **an illustration must illustrate.** Illustration is a means to an end, and not an end in itself. If allegories, parables, metaphors, diagrams, pictures, models, anecdotes, imagery, or the other forms which illustration may take, do not shed light upon the subject in hand, they cannot be called illustration at all, but are in the nature of digression.

Dr. Johnson defines the verb “illustrate” thus : —“To brighten with light.” The idea is, that the illustration of a subject, affects it in the same way that switching on the electric light affects a room—it makes everything clearly visible. The analogy is easily traceable. How often, when one has unsuccessfully endeavoured to explain a subject, the use of an illustration has called forth the glad cry from the delighted pupil—“Oh now **I see.**” We all of us realise how necessary are

pictures in any book which deals with natural history, botany, travels, etc., and it is very obvious that nothing can render a book on the subject of machinery so "luminous" as good diagrams.

We will endeavour to illustrate our present subject in such a way as to show, by practical examples, how useful is this method of lighting up a subject. We all feel, however unconsciously, that ocular demonstration is most useful. We could not give a lesson upon *e.g.* a watch, without taking out our own timepiece to illustrate the several points of our instruction. If we ask anyone to define a spiral staircase, he invariably uses his hands or a pencil, in order to illustrate what it is.

But to return to the point touched upon just now. An illustration is not what it claims to be unless it illustrates. In order to do so it **must not only be appropriate, but it must seem appropriate to the pupil, as well as to the teacher.** The connection between the illustration and the point it is supposed to lighten up, and make clear, may exist in the mind of the teacher alone. From the pupil's point of view it may have the contrary effect, it may only distract or dazzle him. The teacher who called forth, in answer to her question, "What is faith?" the reply · "Jam in the cupboard" had obscured the meaning, and not made it clearer by her illustra-

tion. Even adults cannot always see the application of so-called illustrations. When Archdeacon Hare preached against "playing at ninepins with Truth," his hearers thought that he displayed an unreasonable hostility towards the game of skittles. When he likened fiery controversialists to men who "walked with lucifer matches loose in their pockets," the farmers thanked him for the zeal with which he watched over their inflammable ricks and haystacks. It is very easy to obscure a subject by means of inappropriate imagery, or **by failing to make clear the application** of the analogy, or metaphor; the more so because children are interested only in the illustration, and not in its application. Some Sunday School teachers fail completely in spite of—or rather on account of—the numerous "illustrations" they employ. Their lessons resemble scrapbooks, composed of unconnected pictures, put together haphazard. In order that it may illustrate, the illustration must not only be appropriate, and to the point, it is necessary to make the application clear to the pupil, in such a way that light is shed upon the difficulty, instead of obscuring the point, and distracting attention from it.

## XLIV

### ILLUSTRATIONS MUST BE SIMPLE AND FAMILIAR

IF the object of illustrations is to make clear what is difficult, and explain the unknown by means of the known, then in order to explain, *e.g.* what kind of animal a tiger is, attention would be drawn to the characteristics of the common cat, and these would be compared with those of the tiger. It would be useless to illustrate the salient features of this princely animal by means of a verbal description of some equally unknown creature, such, for instance, as the leopard. In fact, unless the child has consciously observed the common cat's chief characteristics, it is useless to merely explain that the tiger's salient features are the same. If the child has not observed how the former's claws act, it is of no use to tell him that those of the latter act in the same way. For this reason it is necessary to produce a cat, and give an object-lesson on it, before using this patient animal as an illustration of something else.

Therefore, we may take it as an axiom that one must make sure, first of all, that what is to be used as an illustration is **already familiar to the pupil**. We can only make sure of this by asking questions.

The **teacher** should be familiar with the things he uses in illustration. After a stranger had addressed the lads of one of our training ships, an officer asked the boys what the stranger had spoken to them about. The lads' reply was witty and to the point—"Two things which he did not understand, religion and ships."

Some women who teach in Sunday Schools, make the same kind of mistake that the stranger did, they illustrate and apply a religious lesson by drawing fancy pictures of boy-life, which are absurdly unnatural, because the teacher does not understand boys. If one does not know the inner life of the average boy, one should avoid illustrating religious truth by beginning: "Once upon a time there was a little boy," etc. A better plan is to elicit, from the boys themselves, practical applications of the lesson. For instance, when dealing with the parable of the Good Samaritan, instead of saying "Once upon a time there was a little boy who found a wounded man by the roadside," etc., it is better to ask: "What would you do if you found such a man bleeding to death?" Or better still:—

Q. "Do you ever see men dying by the roadside?"

A. "No, sir."

Q. "How then can you act the Good Samaritan?"

(No reply.)

"Well, if your little sister fell down and hurt herself, what would you do?" Or: "When your mother is ill, what can you do to help?"

It is better to employ homely illustrations, than to use flashy ready-made stories. For instance, to ask such questions as the following:—"Was the Samaritan a friend of the man who fell among thieves?" "What ought you to do if your enemy fell into the river?" etc., is better than to tell the following story, which attracts too much attention to itself, and is consequently rather a digression than an illustration.

"'Let him sink: he is only a Jew!' was the cry of the careless onlookers of Cracow, as they stood on the banks of the river, into which a young man had fallen, and witnessed his dying struggles to regain the shore. 'Let him sink,' they cried again, 'he's only a Jew!' At this point another man broke through the crowd, which tried to hold him back, and plunged into the roaring torrent, and with great difficulty brought the unconscious Jew to shore. The jeers of the bystanders for saving the life of a

Jew were the only salutation that greeted the brave and noble deed ; but these suddenly ceased when they perceived that the drowning man was in reality a Gentile, and his heroic rescuer a Jew." (Moody).

This is a very fine story, but it is too interesting, and too long, and is apt to leave the attention of the pupil permanently upon the banks of the Vistula.

## XLV

### ILLUSTRATIONS MUST ILLUSTRATE

AN American describes a picture called 'The Coronation,' but which he called the 'Hair Trunk.' He describes how marvellously well every hair is painted, and also every nail. This trunk occupies the centre of the picture, and rivets the attention of all who look at the artist's representation of the Coronation. It is impossible to notice king and courtiers, or to allow the eye to rest for a moment upon any other feature of the large picture. The wonderful box is supreme, and all absorbing in its interest, and it is absurd to call the work anything else than the 'Hair Trunk,' because all else is subordinated to this masterpiece.

The way in which this absurd box dominated the interest of the American humourist, is an illustration of the way in which an anecdote absorbs the attention of many a Sunday School class, and distracts all interest from the subject of the lesson. If asked, after school, what the subject



of the lesson was, they reply, without hesitation, by giving a résumé of the anecdote. It is the only thing they remember, and the only part of the lesson which attracted their attention. It is impossible to extract from them any other account of the subject dealt with, than that it was about "a **little boy**" who did such and such things. Oftener than not the allegory was about a **naughty** boy, and the only part of the story they remember is the interesting sins he committed. They have learned something, it is true, but only a knowledge of evil.

Sometimes, instead of making up his own story, the teacher will tell one that is given in the Bible. (It may be the murder scene in the tent of Jael the wife of Heber.) Wherever the story may have come from, if it conveyed no moral or spiritual lesson, it was of no use, except as adding another to the child's list of stories.

Sometimes a passage of Jewish, or English, History constituted the 'Hair Trunk,' and distracted attention from the subject. In this case something useful has been taught—the names of a few kings of Israel, or of England. But information of this kind, **if it conveys no moral, however useful in other respects, is no part of religious education.** To teach history, science, geography, natural history, biography, and nothing else, is to leave the subject of religion untouched,

whether the textbook is the Bible or some other authority. They may be made excellent vehicles for the conveyance of spiritual and moral instruction, but unless they do convey that information they are of no spiritual or moral use.

The fact that children usually remember only the story, and not its application, and lavish their attention wholly upon the former, is no argument against the use, but only against the abuse of illustrations. If properly employed, these should be so firmly attached to the moral they convey, that it is impossible to recollect the one without the other. Thus the stories resemble the buoys used for marking the position of hidden moorings. The important thing is the moorings, but without the buoy it would be very difficult to find them. If the two become disconnected, both cease to be of any use. In the same way the illustration floats upon the surface of the mind. It catches the eye of the imagination, and memory easily grasps it whenever desired. Then, if the connection between the illustration and what it illustrates, holds, and will bear the strain, the mind can pull up the chain of ideas, which have sunk away beneath the surface of consciousness, and disappeared from the view of the mind's eye.

To change the metaphor; illustrations are fixing devices, which serve the same purpose as the knot at the end of the tailor's cotton. If the knot (of

illustration) becomes detached from the thread (of the discourse) it is useless, but so long as the connection lasts, it prevents the work from falling to pieces. In short, it is a fixing device, as well as a means of securing attention, and interest. We all of us forget the sermons we hear, but the illustrations we remember, if they were interesting ones; and if they really illustrated the subject dealt with, we can call up the latter by means of the former, by the law of the association of ideas. This is true of adults, but it applies much more forcibly to children. Grown-up people can think in the abstract, children only in the concrete. Our other faculties are developed equally with our imagination. Children of a certain age seem to have hardly any other faculty than imagination. "Tell us a tale," is the uttered, or unuttered, request of the pupil. In response we supply him with TRUTH—(embodied in a tale).

## XLVI

### VARIETY

QUESTIONING, and illustration, are two of the most useful of teaching devices, and should be used in such a way as to secure variety. Neither must be used too exclusively. A carpenter, or other mechanic, employs many different kinds of tools, using each to do the special work for which it was designed. The same should be done by the manufacturer of character. He should not work with only one teaching device, but several, and should also aim at varying his methods of teaching, in such a way as to avoid monotony.

Much may be done, too, in **varying the position of the pupils**, letting them stand, sit, and move, in order to make a change.

The same may be said with regard to the **mental** attitude of the pupil. It should be varied. The lesson should be broken up into as many kinds of 'movement' as is considered advisable. Let us confine our attention, for the moment, to the application of this principle as

regards the use of illustrations. We can ring the changes somewhat as follows: (1) Word-Pictures, (2) Diagrams on the blackboard (or on paper), (3) Coloured prints, (4) Models. For instance, take the parable of the Prodigal Son.—One would begin by making the children ‘see’ the letter of the parable.—What the pupils call the ‘earthly story’ part. Thus [(1) Word-pictures] there is (*a*) the farm, (*b*) the house, (*c*) the family, (*d*) the parting, (*e*) the traveller; and so on. (How much ‘movement’ Christ put into His teaching.) At this point a coloured print might be shown, or a **series** of pictures. Then questions might be asked, on what had been already elicited, or told, or dramatised, or shown. The chief points could, at the same time, be written on the board (or on a large card, in the case of a small class). Then would follow a series of illustrations, given by the teacher, or questioned out of the pupils, with regard to the **spiritual** lessons of the story. **Do not, however, try to do too much in one lesson.**

## XLVII

### HOW TO TELL A STORY

IN order to touch the heart of another, one needs a heart of one's own, with which to do it. To move another, one must oneself be capable of being moved.

It is also necessary, not only to feel emotion, but to **display** it.

Moreover one must be able to **transfer** it, as well as have it. The eyes of a teacher may be full of tears, when appealing to the hearts of her pupils, and yet the naughty children may only laugh at her. Another teacher may **know how** to draw tears from her class, and yet not have any undue moisture in her own eyes. This is accounted for by the fact that to stir emotion in others is an art. In other words, it needs skill and dexterity. One needs to **know how**.

“*Ars longa vita brevis*”—but a few germinal thoughts on the subject may be useful. In order to touch the hearts of others, (one must have a heart, but) it is not necessary to feel emotion at the moment when one is raising it in others. If

we may take an illustration from the art of reciting—the best reciters do not feel much emotion during the time that they are raising it in their audience.\* If they keenly felt the sentiments they display, the wear and tear would soon kill them, or land them in the mad-house.

Then again, it is impossible to feel keenly a violent emotion which one has had to **rehearse scores of times**. No reciter could feel his part intensely, several times a week, year after year. Reciting is an art, not a sentiment. The piece must, of course, have been acutely felt at one time—perhaps scores of times,—but to be overcome by emotion when on the platform would be to mumble indistinctly, and forget all the laws of elocution.

It may be argued that the art of reciting bears no resemblance to the art of teaching. Be this as it may, there is no doubt that **the art of telling a story well**, resembles very closely the art of reciting. We are now dealing with the subject of telling stories, and otherwise illustrating the lesson, and our point is that it needs skill and dexterity, and that it is very much the same art as reciting. For instance, the two arts are the same in the following respects. (a) Both deal with material, written by one person, and repeated by another. (b) Both appeal to the emotions. (c) Both

\* There are a few exceptions.

require the dramatic, and soulful delivery, of what has become stale, and old, to the person, who, in the process of learning and dramatising it, has become heartily tired of the story. It is as well, then, for the teacher to understand (1) That if properly told, the story, which has lost all its freshness for the teacher, may greatly affect the child, who hears it for the **first time**. (2) That in order that the hearer may be moved, the storyteller must deliver his tale in a moving manner. (3) In order to make the hearer 'see' the event described, the speaker must 'see' the scene vividly himself, while he is describing it. (4) The story must be told, (not as if it had been learned up)—nor as if it were being read out of a book—but as if the words in which it is told sprang **hot, and fresh, and impromptu**, from the soul of him who tells it. (5) In order to tell a tale properly, it must be **exceedingly well known**, and must have been polished and re-polished beforehand. In order to deliver well, one must not have to think about the next word. Someone complimented Mark Twain upon the fresh and impromptu way in which he told an exceedingly appropriate anecdote, apparently upon the spur of the moment. The American humourist replied: "That story cost me more than one sleepless night, during the period while I was perfecting it."



If a humourist needs to give—and gladly lavishes—so much pains upon an after-dinner story, ought not we to take some trouble to tell our stories in an effective manner.

Shall art be rigorously excluded from God's service, because it is art? Shall anything be considered good enough for His work? Surely not! Art is only another word for skill. What but idleness can explain the aversion to dexterity?\*

We must beware of telling the same story twice to the same audience. The first time they hear it they are moved with the feelings we wish to raise. The second time we tell it, they are apt to think that the story is not quite so new as it was. And if we tell it a third time, they wish they had never heard it at all.

\* Sidney Smith said, that it is a mistake to imagine that the only way in which sin can be taken from man, is the way in which Eve was taken from Adam—viz. By casting him into a deep sleep.

## XLVIII

### WHERE TO FIND ILLUSTRATIONS

THERE are very many books of anecdotes, but all are unsatisfactory, with the exception of those by Moody, notably his *Tools for Teachers*. But even if one uses his illustrations, one should do so only in one way, namely, by learning them. To hurriedly hunt up illustrations, after one had prepared a lesson, and so to speak, season it with stories, as one uses pepper to render food more appetising, is to employ them in the wrong way. This method of lighting up a lesson, leads almost inevitably to obscuring the subject, and introducing digressions. The anecdotes, metaphors, etc., crammed up for the occasion, lie too much upon the surface of the teacher's mind, and are introduced into the lesson, because they are handy, rather than because they are appropriate. They are employed for their own sake, rather than as a means to a definite end. The lesson is shaped to fit the stories, rather than *vice versâ*. Illustrations

should grow naturally out of the subject, not be added afterwards from a ready-made collection.

Someone has likened illustrations to windows, and has pointed out that their object is to introduce light. They should, therefore, be transparent, and only used for lighting purposes. No one would think of building a cathedral in order to exhibit a stained-glass window, yet this is exactly the kind of thing that is frequently done in teaching. A highly coloured story, which illustrates nothing in particular, but which **distracts attention to itself**, on account of its independent interest, is used as the nucleus round which to build a lesson. The latter is nothing more than a framework to exhibit the former. If taken from the Bible, the story is regarded as quite sufficient in itself, in fact it constitutes the lesson, which begins and ends with "picture," and nothing else.

But to return to the consideration of where to find illustrations—not with the purpose of adding them straight from the book to the lesson, still less with the idea of building a lesson round them,—but in order to store the mind of the teacher with things new and old, which he can bring out **in due season**, as required, to illustrate his teaching.

What a rich storehouse of illustrations we have in the inspired literature, which we call **the Bible**. There we have stories in abundance, not foolish

anecdotes, but sublime and inspired biography, history, allegory, and parable, specially written for the childlike.

Then, there is the rich quarry of **daily life**, from which to dig very treasures of illustration.

**Nature**, too, teems with most interesting analogies, and "likes," which enable us to explain the unseen and spiritual, by means of the seen and physical. We ought to illustrate God's truth, in one realm of providence, by means of another. Let us copy our Divine Master's method, and also use His figures, imagery, and comparisons, and not only so, but **find some for ourselves, from the same sources**. All around us are analogies which thrust themselves upon the notice of teachers. Need we use dull collections of doubtful anecdotes, compiled by alien minds, when we may use our own intelligence, and see first hand, through the telescope and microscope, the works of God. How better can we illustrate the **power** of the Almighty, than by means of the former, or His **care for the least of His creatures**, than by means of the latter?

Then again, we are apt to go too exclusively to **Jewish History**, in order to show how God deals with nations. May we not trace the same divine hand, in **our own** history too? Were the Jews the people of God to a greater extent than we are? Does **ancient** history teach more about

God than the history of yesterday? Let us be prophets—we teachers of the twentieth century—because it is as necessary to-day, as it was 4,000 years ago, to express the message of God in terms of everyday life, and trace the hand of God in the events of the moment. (It is part of our duty to read the newspaper.)

If there is any department of life, or of thought and knowledge, in which the providence of God may not be seen—then we have in it the one subject which may not be used as a quarry, out of which to dig the rough ore, from which appropriate illustrations may be worked up. But if there is any such barren subject we have not been able to discover it; God's providence may be everywhere seen, by those who have an eye for the divine. Depend upon it, the hand of God was never more obviously present, in the management of the lives of individuals, and of nations, of Church and of State, than it is to-day. "Lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (S. Matt. xxviii. 20). (More than one child has asked its mother the apparently pertinent question—"Is God dead?")

## XLIX

### PICTURES

WHENEVER possible, coloured prints, photographs, drawings, etc., should be used, in preference to word-pictures. The eye is the best organ of communication with the mind. **Word-pictures**, it is true, appeal to the “mind’s eye,” as we term it, but the eye of the imagination is not so useful a servant of knowledge, as is the physical organ of vision. The latter sees more easily, and more **accurately**. Then again, what is acquired through this medium is retained much longer, than impressions received through any other channel—“**The eye remembers.**”

Pictures vary very much, of course, not merely in quality, but also in usefulness. They should be clear, and easily seen, and understood. Some are too vague. And they should be large enough to be seen easily by every member of the class.

Also they **must be true**. The majority of religious pictures are very much the reverse of true. They give wholly erroneous impressions,

and often **contradict the oral teaching of the teacher**, which they are intended to illustrate.\* To every lover of truth, the average stained-glass window, and religious picture, is a source of keen annoyance, if not of contemptuous amusement. It is much better not to use a picture at all, for the purpose of teaching, than to employ one which is a coloured lie, an artistic absurdity, a comic skit, or an unintentional blasphemy.

The fewer details a picture has, the better. Attention has to be fixed upon one point only at a time, consequently every unnecessary detail is a useless cause of distraction.

\* Children believe the picture to be right, and the teacher wrong.

## L

### THE BLACK-BOARD

THE advantage of using a black-board, when instructing a large class, or a piece of card, when teaching a few children, lies in the fact that the teacher can draw **exactly what he requires**. He can also draw it little by little, as the lesson advances. Thus, only one point is illustrated at a time, and attention is not distracted by unnecessary, or premature details.

The chief points of the lesson ought, also, to be written up as they occur. This assists the memory, and the understanding, of the pupil, and also throws up into bold relief the most important ideas of the lessons.

By the use of **coloured** chalks, distinction can be made between different details of the picture, and between the different ideas of the lesson.



## LI

### MODELS

NOTHING appeals so forcibly, intelligibly, and clearly, to the mind of the child, as a model, preferably a **working** model. For instance, what a difference it makes to a lesson on the subject of Christ's Resurrection, if one can produce a working model of a Jewish sepulchre, and show how the stone rolled in its groove, and acted as a door to the cave. These models can be easily, and cheaply purchased, from the Sunday School Institute. But, as a rule, it is easy to make them for oneself. Often all that is necessary is a few books, which can be stood up on end.

One must, of course, **understand** a subject, before one can thus illustrate and explain it. A Sunday School teacher, when giving a lesson upon S. Peter's trance on the house-top, noticed that one of her class was gazing fixedly at the house-top opposite, which had a very sloping roof. The boy was illustrating the lesson for himself, as boys will do, and visualising the scene depicted.

Presently, he turned to the teacher, and said:—  
“Why did not Peter **fall off** the roof?” The  
“teacher” was quite at a loss to find an answer,  
but the “teacher” of the next class, nobly and  
fearlessly stepped into the breach, and said “With  
man it is impossible, but not with God, with Him  
all things are possible.”

Instead of telling the boy that S. Peter was  
kept from rolling off the roof, by means of a  
miracle, which suspended the law of gravitation,  
the “teacher” ought to have said “Get me some  
Bibles!” Then, using them as **bricks**, she could  
have taught her class the nature of an eastern  
house, and explained that the house-tops, being  
flat and cool, were used for the same purposes  
that we employ drawing-rooms. In this way she  
could explain many scriptural passages. For  
instance, Christ’s advice to the Christians to flee  
from house-top to house-top, when Jerusalem  
should be about to be surrounded by the Romans,  
and when the Jewish Zealots would be spilling  
the blood of their countrymen like water, in the  
streets of the Sacred City. She could tell them  
how that the Christians, in A.D. 70, followed their  
Lord’s advice, and thus escaped to Pella.

## LII

### OBJECT-LESSONS

At first sight it may appear that religion is one of those subjects which can hardly be taught by means of object-lessons. But on second thoughts it becomes evident, that, on account of the spiritual nature of the subject, and the material nature of the pupil, it is necessary to employ visible things, in order to make known the invisible. It is useful to pass, in this way, from the known to the unknown, from the simple and obvious, to the difficult and obscure. Spurgeon, in order to show how much could be done in this way, issued a book of object-lessons, called *Sermons in Candles*, including about a hundred and fifty object-lessons, illustrated by means of candles.

It should be borne in mind however, that to see, is not the same thing as to observe. The child may see the object, without observing **that part of it** which is important. An Indian who has never seen a picture of a man, can observe no resemblance, whatever, between it and what it

represents. It is mere colour, on paper, to his untrained eye, and conveys no further impression to him. It is necessary to **teach him** to trace the resemblance.

This fact is so far true of children, that their observation needs to be directed. If asked to draw, from memory, some object with which they are most familiar, they display how little they have observed it. Try, for instance, how far a child can draw a man. Apart from the fact that perhaps the child does not know how to draw, it is obvious that he has not consciously observed even a human being, in such a way as to have formed a correct image in the mind. This is necessarily still more the case with less familiar objects. Let the children then, in answer to questions, be led to point out the chief features of the object exhibited, before being taught the lessons which those features are intended to illustrate. Intelligent observation of the object, must precede any attempt to employ that object in the elucidation of truths, which it may be used to illustrate.

### LIII

## THE ABSOLUTE NECESSITY OF ORDER AND DISCIPLINE

SUNDAY School Teachers often complain that it is impossible to give a satisfactory lesson on account of the disorder in school. They say—and very truly—that however well they may have prepared the lesson, it is impossible to obtain a hearing, because of the noise, and bad behaviour of the boys. Usually the fault is largely in the nature of the lesson. It does not interest the class sufficiently to keep them quiet. But, assuming that the teacher knows how to teach, if there is bad behaviour it is because the teacher does not know how to rule. Sometimes, of course, the fault lies in the Superintendent, or in the teachers of surrounding classes. Good teachers suffer, on account of the incompetence of the others. It is well then—not merely to study the art of government, oneself—but also to endeavour to persuade all the teachers to attend meetings, at which the art of government is discussed and studied. In

order to acquire easy and efficient control of boys, it is necessary to **know how** to manage them. To complain that they are unmanageable is to confess incompetency, due to ignorance of the art of government. Speaking for myself, I learned what I know of this art, largely in the expensive school of experience. **To say that "disciplinarians are born—not made" is to confound the rare exception with the general rule.** Some, no doubt, have more or less of a natural gift for governing, and these of course have the less to learn of the art. But it is true of everyone, without exception, that be his natural talent for command what it may—in order to manage boys he must **know how** to do so. What is required, is not only to enforce a reluctant outward compliance, and compel a mere surface obedience, but rather to acquire the knack of easily obtaining a true and ready spirit of order, and a cheerful and willing obedience.

In Sunday Schools the rewards and punishments are very insignificant, and force is quite out of place; consequently, a higher standard of the art of ruling is required, than in any other form of government. In other words, the proportion of skill and dexterity required, is in an inverse ratio to the teacher's means of compulsion.

## HOW TO ENSURE A SPIRIT OF ORDER

THE strength of the religious teacher's position lies in the fact that he is doing God's work, and is therefore supported by His help and authority. Let us not descend from the lofty position which is ours, and which we are recognised as occupying. The children should be taught that to disobey God's representative, is to disobey God Himself.

**Appeal to the best motives of your pupils,** and trust to their higher instincts. In one of our great manufacturing cities, the police frequently had to call in the aid of a vicar, to quell disorders in the slums. When force had failed, the police turned to the parson, for the exercise of his influence. This effeminate,\* and mild-mannered ecclesiastic, appeared upon the scene of disorder, not only as a man of God, but also as a well-tried friend, whose disinterested and self-sacrificing labours for the people, carried more weight than the respect due to his office. Moreover he knew each man's home, and con-

\* He succeeded in spite of his effeminacy.

sequently was in a position to appeal to that side of each individual which was most susceptible of influence. The teacher should adopt the same methods. **Love the children, and thus win their affection. Deserve respect, and thus secure it.** Know each child individually, and also his home life. It is worth while to have the home influence, of every child, on one's side.

Of course, each pupil requires its own individual, and personal, kind of management. It is wise to appeal to the heart of the one, to the sense of right of another, to the love of order in a third, to the religious feelings of a fourth, and to the sense of shame in a fifth.

Love, sympathy, tact, patience, knowledge, all are necessary.

**Expect to be obeyed**—"They can conquer who believe they can." If you have no confidence in yourself, do not make a parade of your weakness before the class.

The following anecdote will illustrate another most important consideration:—

At a clerical meeting, a very aged clergyman told a story of his early boyhood. He said, "The gardener once accused me, to my mother, of having done something wrong. My mother looked me in the face, and said to my accuser, 'No! I am sure Master John could not have done such a thing.' He added, 'But I had done



it you know.'” He went on to say that he had never forgotten the lesson he learned that day. All through his life, he had tried to follow her wise method of rebuke. Show children that you expect much of them, and they will not disappoint you. We all live up to the estimate which others have of us; and those who expect much of others are not disappointed.

**Set a good example.** If we set at nought school rules, or fail to answer at once to school signals, we cannot be surprised if our pupils do the same, and also disobey us, personally.

Then, again, self-control in the teacher influences his pupils to curb their unruly desires. He who has learned how to obey, can teach what he has himself learned; and only the practice of self-restraint can enable one to inculcate that virtue in others.

**Be cheerful and good-humoured,** and put the class into a good humour. Frequently a joke has averted a riot. Not a display of force and anger, but the exercise of tact and sympathy, is what is needed. The management of a restive class, and the control of a fresh horse, have many points of resemblance. In each case a gentle woman's hand can often achieve what no display of force and violence would ever accomplish. The latter may drive in the symptoms of unrest and disorder, the former alone can win over the spirit and the will,

and secure the desired **disposition**. Children prefer order, if they are managed with patience, knowledge, and tact, but if the (restive horse, or) child, once gets out of hand, it is very difficult to undo the mischief which has resulted from one's weakness.

## LV

### HOW TO QUELL DISORDER

**Nip it in the bud.** Be quite determined, and definite in your own mind, as to what to allow, and what to forbid. Make it equally clear to the class—exactly what they may, and may not do. When any boy seems inclined to overstep the bounds you have drawn, nip the tendency to insubordination in the bud, before the culprit is conscious of his tendency, and before the others have noticed anything amiss. Peace at any price is sure to end in war; and to leave an undefined boundary, between the lawful and unlawful, will have the same effect.

It is necessary to keep one's eye free to wander over the class, and to check by a glance any disorder. It is, consequently, fatal to use voluminous notes, or to turn one's mind's eye inwards, upon the next point of the lesson, instead of outwards on the faces of the class. This means that the lesson must be very well prepared. Every boy glances at the teacher's face before he misbehaves. He looks to see, first, if he is observed, and secondly,

whether the teacher is likely to interfere. (One has read wonderful stories about the power of the human eye in quelling even wild beasts.)

Then, again, the teacher must be equal, and constant, in his correction of disorder. **He must not be fickle.** If, what enrages him one day, amuses him the next, or if he smiles at one boy's attempt at wit, and quells another boy's efforts to be humorous, he can hardly blame the class if they accuse him of partiality, injustice, and unreasonableness. The teacher's moods may vary, so too may the quality of the jokes made by different boys, but the class do not study the reasons for the teacher's apparent inconsistencies. Some teachers are magisterial one day, and over-familiar the next, and the third day complain of disorder in the class. Similarly, a parent will smile appreciatively at her child's naughtiness or rudeness, and laughingly quote the rude speech, in the hearing of the child, one day, and beat the child for the same behaviour the next day. The natural result is that she is accused of injustice, and inevitably breeds fierce rebellion in the heart of her young critic. It is doubtless very easy to blame children for their unruliness, but it is more profitable to take some pains to learn how to rule. **Insubordination on the part of the pupil, implies ignorance of the art of government on the part of the teacher.**

A common mistake, made by rulers of all kinds, is the indulgence in an unwise familiarity, which breeds contempt in the governed. If the ruler, himself, constantly lowers his own dignity, he must not be surprised if the governed treat him with scant respect.

I do not mean to imply that the teacher should be distant and magisterial; on the contrary, I think it almost imperative that he should join with the children in their games and pleasures,—not merely meet them in school officially. But it is necessary to remember constantly, that unquestioning obedience must be the invariable rule, on all occasions, and that one must never allow the children to forget their relative position, or presume in any way, even when engaged in a romp, or when playing a game of football. It is not the boy, but the teacher who forgets, and then the latter blames the former, as soon as his forgetfulness becomes inconvenient. A bad ruler blames those whom he is supposed to govern. A good ruler blames himself, for having failed to govern wisely and well, and learns by past mistakes how best to improve his methods, in the future. **Skill in the art of government, not hostility to the governed, is what is required.**

## LVI

### SUAVITER IN MODO, FORTITER IN RE

IN the parable of the Marriage of the King's Son (S. Matt. xxii.) the servants are told to go out into the highways and hedges and 'woo' people to come in. The translators of our Authorised Version made the same mistake that many teachers fall into. **We are told to woo**; we are not told to compel. There is all the difference between the two. While it is certainly necessary to insist, good-humouredly, upon instant, and unquestioning obedience, and to quell any tendency to disorder, firmly, calmly, and at once—it is a fatal error to treat as condemned criminals a class of Sunday School boys, who have come to learn about the God of Love, and to receive instruction with regard to the good news of the Gospel of Peace.

The exercise of authority should be natural, pleasant, and unobtrusive. But the velvet glove, of kindly sympathy and love, must cover the iron hand of **unbending decision**. Jesus Christ could

be severe on occasion, as the Pharisees knew to their cost, and the meek and lowly Saviour allowed the iron hand to be felt, when His Father's House of Prayer was turned into a den of thieves. To treat a true boy—who is full of spirit—as if he were an invalid girl, is to win his contempt, and cause him to display it; and on the other hand, to treat him as a criminal, is to go far towards making him one.

The religious teacher represents God, and she teaches more by what she is, and does, than by what she says—consequently she unconsciously influences her pupils' ideas about God's government, by means of her own methods of government. The weak and sentimental teacher too often teaches the children (by her behaviour) that the Almighty is a weak sentimentalist, who will inevitably pardon good and bad alike, and make no difference between the two. Let us not, by our methods of government, give the erroneous impression that He whom we represent will regard all alike as miserable sinners, and treat everyone with a weak sentimentality, which draws no distinction between the good and the bad. Whatever may be our idea of what Hell will be like, there is no doubt that sin is punished.

With regard to any **rewards and punishments** we may mete out—they will be estimated by the **children at the valuation we ourselves seem to**

**attach to them.** In themselves they amount to practically nothing. But we can, by our **manner**, and wise employment of them, render them exceedingly powerful inducements. The very same command, for instance, can be made either a **great reward**, or a **serious punishment**. For example—"Come and sit beside me"—may be regarded by a child as either the one, or the other, or may be treated with supreme indifference, and quite safely disregarded by him.\*

\* Some Sunday-School-Teachers place the most unruly boys beside them, in order to be able to shake them fiercely at intervals. Others place the best boys next to them, in order to be able to entwine their arms lovingly around them, all the time. The latter, banish a naughty child to the far end of the class *where they can see him*.



## LVII

### HOW NOT TO DO IT

ONE may learn as much from another's mistakes, as from his excellencies and strong points. Someone has said that fools learn by their own mistakes—wise men by the mistakes of others. With the idea of giving an illustration of what to avoid, we may take a glance at a **badly conducted\*** Band of Hope Meeting, at which the order and discipline are "hopeless," no "temperance" is displayed in the matter of behaviour, and an exuberance of spirits, and a lack of self-control, are manifested, in excess of what would result from an inordinate consumption of alcohol.

If, when walking quietly along about 6.30 p.m. one encounters, in the street, a crowd of noisy children, who are being anxiously watched by a worried policeman, one may hazard a shrewd guess that one has found the desired "shocking example." At about 6.45 (fifteen minutes late)

\* I am far from wishing to imply that Bands of Hope are *usually* conducted badly.

the Superintendent of the so-called "Band of Hope" arrives. A noisy stampede upstairs results, followed by fifteen minutes' bedlam, while the children are being marked, and relieved of their subscription of one penny. Then the nervous and excitable Superintendent wildly endeavours to obtain silence for prayers, knowing however, from past experience, that she will not succeed. In order to lessen the din—instead of giving some definite and emphatic signal, the meaning of which is well known, and which signifies **Instant Silence**—she begins to shout at the children, and to ring, at frequent intervals, a broken-down bell. She ought to make one sharp, clear, staccato sound, like the report of a pistol, and then insist upon immediate silence. This should be accompanied by a firm, and cheery call, to "stand." Instead of this she makes vague, and timid sounds, with a bell which was feeble in the extreme even when it was new, and which was long ago rendered useless by the boys, who ring it violently, several times during every meeting—at awkward moments—in order to raise a laugh, and upset the class. Perhaps while the Superintendent has been alternately scolding, shouting, and peevishly ringing the bell (like a muffin man) some of the children have tired of the fun, and are inclined to moderate the noise they have been making. The opportunity is seized to give out

the hymn. As a rule, however, the Superintendent has omitted to choose one beforehand. The result is that while she is trying to make up her distracted mind which hymn to choose, the boys are once again quite out of hand. The result is more bell-ringing, and nagging of the **whole class**,\* after which the hymn is given out, if, in her excitement, the Superintendent has not forgotten it. Then she has to ask one of her musical assistants to play the broken-down harmonium. She has, however, forgotten whose turn it is to accompany the hymn, so she wanders off to make inquiries, with the result that once again the noise is excessive. Having to some slight extent quieted the children, she nervously gives out the hymn. At this point several boys shout out that the hymn-books have not been handed round. This is accordingly done, and is a source of additional noise. Then the hymn is commenced, and various children bawl out inquiries as to what is the number of it. Some sit, some stand, many sing purposely out of tune, and a few make up words of their own, which are understood to be humorous, and are perhaps blasphemous. It is at this point, usually, that the speaker of the evening arrives, and her arrival makes a diversion. Prayers follow, during which the boys

\* Thus the ring leaders of riot escape their just share of blame, and the well disposed are unjustly condemned, and lose all incentive to behave well.

seize the opportunity of taking away the speaker's notes, which she had placed in front of her while closing her eyes for the devotions, and without which she cannot speak coherently. The remaining half-hour, or so, during which the meeting lasts, resembles the first part, so far as disorder is concerned, and the whole serves as a useful object-lesson on the subject of "How **not** to do it." \*

\* See article xvii. on page 48.

## LVIII

### THE EXERCISE OF AUTHORITY

LONDON, in his *Principles and Practice of Teaching and Class Management* (Third Edition, p. 191) writes as follows:—"The mode in which the teacher brings his personal influence and power of command to bear upon children is one of the most important factors in disciplinary control. **Authority is not a matter to be talked about in School**; like instruments of punishment it is best kept entirely in the background till needed. When occasion arises for its exercise, it is not the substance of what the teacher says which affects the children, so much as the quiet confidence of his manner—the calm decision, the clear, firm ring of the voice, the evident determination to have things done decently and in order. There is no stern magisterial demeanour, no parade of command, no attempt to enforce obedience by mere loudness of voice or angry assertion. On the contrary there is an **undemonstrative consciousness of power**, which the children re-

cognise instantly as arising from strength of character, fearlessness in the performance of duty, and perfect self-control, a power which is utterly distinct from any mere external exhibition of force, and which shows that while the teacher remembers the consideration and respect due to others, he is not likely to forget what is due to himself and the authority which he represents. Bluster is never mistaken by children for power, and is very apt to aggravate the mischief it is intended to cure."

## LIX

### IMPORTANCE OF PREPARATION— GENERAL AND SPECIAL

IN his book, *The Cure of Souls*, Dr. John Watson (Ian Maclaren) deals with the subject of preparation for preaching, and what he says applies equally to preparation for teaching. He remarks (I quote from memory) that the question is often asked:—"How long does it take to prepare a Sermon?" If by this question is meant how long does it take to write, then the answer is a couple of hours or so. But if the question means how much previous thought was required, in order to prepare for that writing, then the reply is 'a week,' 'a month,' or whatever time may have been at one's disposal for special preparation. If on the other hand the question means, how long were the thoughts, which were expressed in the sermon, growing in the preacher's mind, then the answer is 'twenty years,' or 'fifty years,' as the case may be. The preacher has expressed **himself**, in what he said, and his 'self' (his character), and know

ledge, are the net result of his entire past. Thus every sermon is the result of both general and special preparation.\*

The same is true of every lesson given to children, whether in the Sunday School, or at the mother's knee. The most important part of the preparation for it, was the past life of the teacher, and the general knowledge acquired, both of the subject to be taught, and also of the way in which to teach it. But in addition to this **general** preparation, much **special** preparation is required. The aged Bishop Dupanloup, whose life's work had consisted chiefly of taking those children's services, which the French call Catechisms, tells us, in his book on Catechising, that he not only wrote down every question that he intended to ask, but also that he wrote every answer that he was likely to receive, in order that he might evolve the succeeding question out of it. This gigantic work (a French Catechism lasts from two to three hours) he polished and repolished—wrote and rewrote—before he ventured to begin his catechising.† If a skilled genius, who has made a speciality of teaching, finds such laborious preparation imperative, how

\* An artist once said that a certain picture took him three weeks to paint, but he added:—"*It took me thirty years to learn how to paint it in three weeks.*"

† Tennyson wrote "Come into the Garden, Maud" in five minutes, but spent two months in improving it.



much more must the amateur, labour, and pray, in preparation of each lesson.

When manager of a Public Elementary School I had a conversation with the experienced and skilled mistress, who taught the **babies** of the Infant School. I ventured a remark to the effect that "having taught the younger children of an infant school for so many years, the preparation of each lesson could not be a very difficult task," because the subjects are the same every year, and are of course, most rudimentary. She told me however, that every moment, which she could seize, was spent upon the preparation of the next day's lessons.\*

Personally, the longer I teach the more do I appreciate the paramount importance of special, as well as of general, preparation.

\* Genius is the infinite capacity for taking pains, and the reason there are so few geniuses is that very few take sufficient pains; they lack thoroughness and persistency.

## LX

### SPECIAL PREPARATION SPONTANEOUS GENERATION OF IDEAS

SOME teachers have little time for lesson preparation. When this is the case they need all the more wisdom in order to make the best use of whatever time they have.

It is very important to begin to pray over, and think over, the next lesson, as soon as possible after the previous one has been given. There are three chief reasons why this is necessary, and the last of the following reasons is the most important :—

1. To begin to think of the next lesson, immediately after having completed the previous one, secures a better sequence—a truer consecutiveness—in the instruction. New information is thus more accurately welded on to the old.

2. Immediately after having given a lesson, one is in a position to plan the next, in such a way as to make the fullest use of the experience just gained.

3. The longer one has the subject of the next lesson in mind, the more ideas collect **unconsciously** about it. There is a **spontaneous** generation of thought, which is carried on even during sleep. The longer one is thinking over a subject, the more time ideas have to thus collect "of themselves," and not only so but **one's thoughts ripen and sort themselves**, and one's ideas digest, so as to become more palatable, from the pupil's point of view. Undigested thought, and jumbled up ideas, in the teacher's mind, produce mental indigestion in the pupil. It is necessary to meditate long on a subject, before undertaking to teach it.

With regard to the spontaneous generation of thought, which is carried on even during sleep, by the process of unconscious cerebration—in order that the ideas that collect round the subject of the next lesson, may be **to the point**—it is necessary that one should make up one's mind, as soon as possible, what exactly that subject is to be, and **what it is not to be**. It is by no means easy to thus isolate a subject from all kindred subjects. It is difficult to separate one distinct, and clear-cut idea from its kindred ideas. Yet if one does not thus distinguish between what is relevant and what is not, the ideas which collect around the nucleus will be as vague, and indefinite, as the original idea itself, and more so. The teacher

can only teach one distinct and well-defined idea, **in all its bearings**, in one lesson. To attempt to do more is to achieve nothing, but to dissipate thought, and baffle the pupil's endeavour to learn something definite.

Very much pruning of one's thoughts is necessary, and in order that one may not have more irrelevant ideas to prune away than is absolutely necessary, one must at the outset decide, not only what the subject of the lesson is to be, but also what it is not to be. **It is very much more difficult to decide what to leave out of a lesson, than it is to know what to put into it.** The teacher sometimes forgets that the lesson should be considered from the point of view of the pupil, who can only fully grasp and adequately apply, one single idea, in half an hour. To endeavour to teach more than the one point, is to fail to teach anything at all, of a definite nature. It is of supreme importance, when preparing a lesson, to form a clearly defined idea as to what exactly **to aim at**, and to keep the mind's eye fixed upon that **one** object.

The unskilled man with a gun, always aims into the **centre** of a covey of birds, with the idea of bringing down more than one. The result is that he hits nothing. The good shot, on the contrary, never does so, but picks out **one bird** only, and hits it. It has been said of amateur teachers that they "aim at **nothing**, and hit it." It would

be truer to say that they aim at **too much at a time**. They resemble the minister, of whom the gamekeeper said that, in his sermons, he “scattered terribly.” (One bullet from a rifle is very much more effective than a pint of dust-shot discharged out of a mortar.)

If the teacher has not a clearly defined idea of what it is exactly that he is to teach—the pupil will have no idea whatever as to what he is expected to learn.

## LXI

### CONSCIOUS PREPARATION

HAVING (1) isolated one simple, and well-defined idea—and by keeping it before the mind, allowed it to grow spontaneously—it is necessary (2) to set to work to think it out in all its bearings. In this way, all that the teacher's past knowledge, and experience are able to supply, is added to the idea. Then, after one has "thought oneself empty," it is necessary (3) to "read oneself full." The next process is (4) one of digestion and assimilation—of meditation and selection. (5) It is essential to make a skeleton. Fold a sheet of paper down the centre, so as to divide it into two parts. One side will be for the skeleton, the other for additions, and corrections. Then by means of single words (or abbreviated clauses) **indicate** each idea. The object of a skeleton is to **secure the correct sequence** of ideas. In order to do so, take a bird's-eye view of the whole lesson. (6) Rearrange, and correct the skeleton, until the sequence of ideas, and their relevancy,

are as perfect as it is possible to make them. Then (7) cut down the analysis to its simpler form. Boil it down, so to speak, until it is the concentrated essence of the lesson. (8) Print it in large, clear type, and (9) take a mental photograph of it.

You now know **what** you are going to teach. It remains to make equally sure of **how** you will teach it.

(10) **Visualise** the class, and keeping them before the mind's eye, begin, in imagination, to teach the lesson you have prepared. In imagination, question the class, illustrate the lesson, recapitulate, and in fact employ all the teaching devices at your disposal. Thus all the arts of which you are master will, so to speak, clothe the skeleton, and complete the structure of the lesson. (11) Then pray for grace and power to **do justice**\* to God's truth, and (12) forget yourself in your message.

\* God helps those who help themselves. Prayer is not a substitute for work. "Laborare est orare." On the other hand we can accomplish nothing without prayer.

## LXII

### HOW TO MAKE NOTES

BACON says that "Reading makes a full man—Speaking a ready man—and **Writing an exact man.**" The object of making notes is, in a measure, the same as that of writing. The fact of making a note, necessitates exact thought, especially if that note sums up much in few words. It **crystallises the essence of an idea.** It represents a focus of thought. Consequently a series of such memoranda sketch out the teacher's ideas as to the essence of the lesson.

To thus put down on paper the skeleton of the subject to be taught, ensures certain advantages. For instance, such an analysis enables a teacher to see the whole lesson in its entirety at a glance. By so doing he can study it, and improve it, **as a whole.** He gets a bird's eye view of it, and is not hampered by a multitude of details. He can thus best arrange, and sort the chief ideas of which it consists. By regarding it in its entirety, he can see at a glance the correct sequence of ideas, and the right proportion between the different parts of the lesson, and give to each its due prominence.



The use of a skeleton enables the teacher to deal with all the **chief** ideas of the lesson, unhampered by details, and undistracted by minutiae.

The first rule to be observed is "**Make the notes as brief as possible.**" Having done so, correct and rearrange the few pregnant words of which they consist. When this has been done they have served their purpose, so far as lesson-preparation is concerned. (They have other uses, however, than rendering one's ideas manageable, during the process of preparation.)

The next use they have is that of **fixing the ideas** they represent, and keeping them from being lost. In order that they may do this, they should be **as expressive as possible**. If one forgets what exactly one meant by a memorandum, it is of course useless as a reminder.

The next thing to consider is the use to be made **in class** of the said memoranda. The amateur teacher feels more confidence if he has something to fall back upon, in this way, even if he does not make constant use of his notes, while delivering the lesson. I would again remind the reader of the importance of cutting down such memoranda until they consist of very few, and very expressive words, and these should be **printed clearly in large type**. Their value lies in the fact that they indicate lines of thought, which can be **seen at a glance**. The following example

may be quoted as an ideal.—(Subject, David's Sin) "PERVERSENESS, PENITENCE, PARDON, PUNISHMENT, PAIN, PEACE."\* It is easy to see how such suggestive words, not only keep the different ideas of the lesson distinct, but also ensure the preservation of the correct sequence, and not only so, but a whole train of thought is expressed in each single and pregnant word. In order to be able to make such notes as these, one needs not only to have made a skeleton, but also to have reduced it to its simplest, and most expressive, form. In doing so one has impressed the bold outline of the lesson upon one's mind, in such a way as to ensure the correct sequence of ideas, for the actual delivery of it in class. One has also formed a miniature photograph of the whole, which will enable one to remember the entire lesson. To write these few words on the black-board—or on a piece of paper—will also enable the **pupil** to obtain that bird's-eye view of the whole lesson, which will enable him to see its proportion, and sequence, and also remember both.

In thus writing up the words, which sum up each portion of the lesson, care should be taken to write **only one at a time**, so as not to distract attention from the one idea which is being taught at the moment.

\* Only a bad teacher would, however, endeavour to teach all this in one lesson.

## LXIII

### HOW TO USE NOTES

WE have already said something about the employment of a very concise analysis of the lesson—expressed in a few pregnant words. These few suggestive words should be **sparingly used in class**. If possible the teacher should dispense with paper entirely. The teacher of children should be a **speaker**. He ought not to be, in any sense, a reader. Every time that he is seen to look at his notes, much of the personal element in his teaching is destroyed. Also his memoranda interest his pupils, more than the lesson, and distract their attention from it. Consequently it is very important to **know the lesson** sufficiently well to dispense altogether with paper.

**The teacher's eyes should be free**, and not tied down to anything. It is difficult to estimate the supreme importance of the use of the eye in teaching. In the first place one has to see every pupil, in order to observe how far each child is (*a*) behaving, (*b*) attending, (*c*) understanding.

Then again the teacher's eyes, are the most expressive part of his face. They are the windows of his soul. The children instinctively keep their gaze fixed upon the teacher's eyes, in order to read in them what he really feels with regard to what he says. We all intuitively look into the eyes of one who addresses us, because these "windows of his soul" express more than his words, and are a running commentary upon them.

"Eye-gate" is wider open than "Ear-gate," and the pupil learns, by means of his eyes, what to think of that which he hears.

Consequently, notes should be as brief as possible. They should also be sufficiently clear, and distinct, to enable the teacher to see them easily, **without seeming to look at them**. They should be mere headings—expressed in single words. To thus concentrate much meaning into one word, is not very easy, but it is exceedingly useful. It is useful to the **teacher**, because it helps him to focus his ideas, and stick to the point, by reducing it to its simplest expression. It helps the **pupil**, because the teacher not only keeps to the point, but also has that point summed up in one word, which he writes up on the black-board (or on a piece of paper), for the benefit of the class. What has been useful to the teacher as a focus, becomes equally useful to the pupil, for the same reason. In order to make the best

use of memoranda they must be of the most useful kind. Let us again quote an example:—

CONVICTION
CONTRITION
CONFESSION
CONVERSION

The pupil need not see so small a piece of card as we have given, and a mere glance, on the part of the teacher, is sufficient to see the whole

lesson, or any part of it, in the fraction of a second.

(From the teacher's point of view, there is nothing much gained by alliteration. Children, however, more easily remember this form of memoranda.)

## LXIV

### CONCLUSION

THE object of this little book has been to present, in some kind of order, a few simple thoughts upon the vast subject of the Religious Education of Children. Where so very much remains yet to be said, it is difficult to conclude.\* But rather than further exhaust the patience of the reader, I must bring my suggestions to an end. I would, however, remind those who have read these articles as far as this point, that **it is very necessary to study Child-Nature**. Many able authorities have written voluminously upon this subject—such men for instance as Sully, Chamberlain, Drummond, etc.,† but the **best teacher is the child himself**. It is more profitable, of course, to study at first hand, and to observe children for oneself, than to read what others have discovered about Child-Nature.

In the same way, in order to learn how to

\* If there appears to be a demand for another book on the subject, the author will gladly supply it.

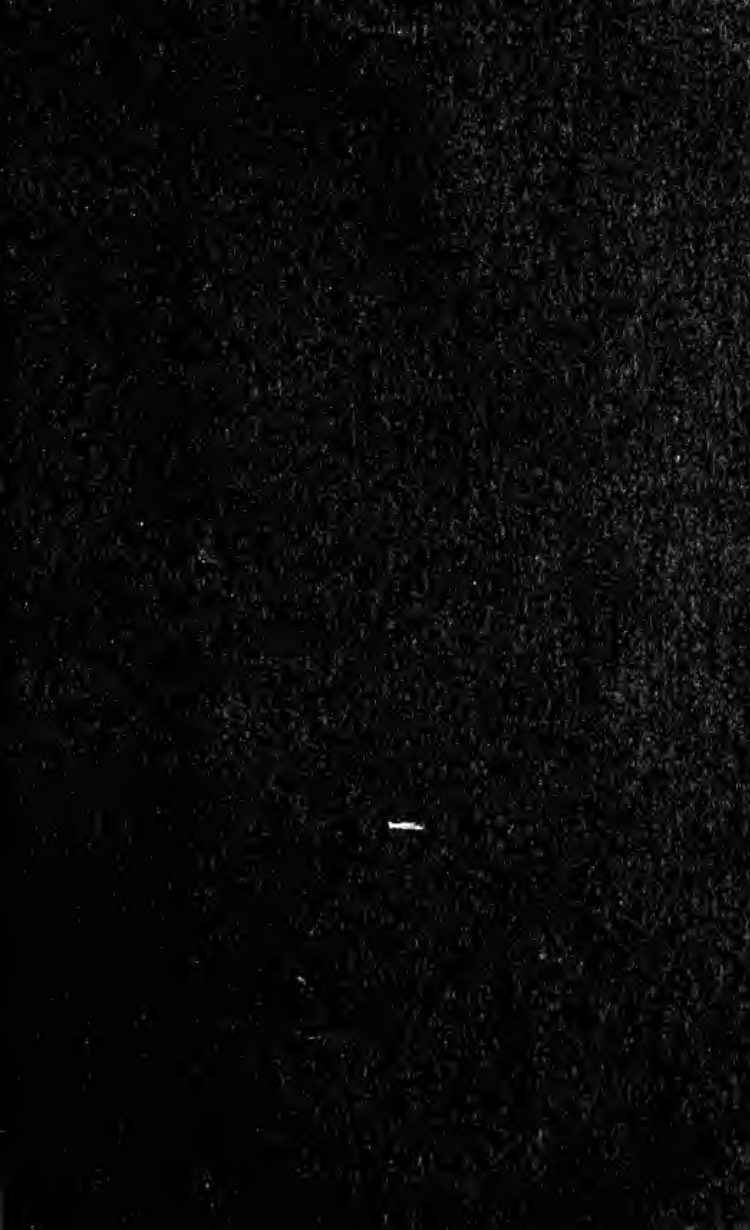
† Adler, Baldwin, Compayré, Froebel, Harrison, Hall, Mason, Perez, Shinn, Tracey, Warner, Wiggin, etc.

**teach** (however useful books, on the subject of education, may be), the best school in which to learn the art of teaching is that of **experience**. I would leave the reader to study in that most practical, if expensive school, and trust that some of the suggestions I have made, may render that experience more profitable, and less costly, than it might otherwise have been.

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